



VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Parent & Student Handbook

LOWER ELEMENTARY (K-4)

EQUIPPING STUDENTS TO BE
CULTURE CHANGERS FOR CHRIST.

2026-2027

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WELCOME TO VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Dear VCS Parents and Students,

We are so glad you are here. Valley Christian Schools has been blessed to serve the East Valley since 1982, first as a high school and now as a comprehensive K-12. The mission of our school is to equip students to be culture changers for Christ by delivering academic excellence, facilitating spiritual growth, and building lifelong community. This mission includes all of us, staff, students, and parents alike. We believe that when you choose a school, you are not simply choosing a school for your student, but for your entire family. We are excited that your family is now part of the Valley Christian family.

This handbook is intended to communicate to parents and students the school's expectations, along with the policies we will employ in our pursuit of excellence. Each of these policies aligns with our core values of honoring Christ, pursuing excellence, building community, and changing culture. This handbook also provides expectations that you can and should have of VCS. Thank you for taking the time to read it. Although we have prepared this handbook with careful and thoughtful planning, we do not intend it to be legalistic, so please view this as a practical guide for "getting along well" at VCS.

As parents, please encourage your student and support the school in creating a nurturing and successful environment for them. There are many opportunities to become involved in the life of the school and to share your time, talent, and treasure with VCS. We are grateful to partner with you in discipling and educating your student, equipping him/her to be a culture changer for Christ.

Please check the parent portal on the school website (valleychristianaz.org/Parents) and RenWeb for the most up-to-date information and the latest school news. We will also send weekly email updates, a monthly e-magazine, and frequent social media posts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube) to keep you connected with the school.

On behalf of your campus principal and our entire staff, we are looking forward to a wonderful 2026-27 school year! Go, Trojans!

For His glory,



Troy A. Thelen '03
Head of School



K-12 BELIEFS, POLICIES, & PROCEDURES

FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS

Mission

The mission of Valley Christian Schools is to equip students to be culture changers for Christ by delivering academic excellence, facilitating spiritual growth, and building lifelong community.

Core Values/The Valley Way

1. Honoring Christ... in everything we do
2. Pursuing Excellence... in all things, for the glory of God
3. Building Community... connecting past, current, and future VCS families for lifelong community
4. Changing Culture... by developing well-rounded Culture Changers for Christ

Statement of Faith

- We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
- We believe that for salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is essential.
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
- We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We believe the Bible to be the only inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God (Sola Scriptura).
- We believe by Faith alone we are saved and not by works (Sola Fide).
- We believe Grace alone is the source of our salvation through Jesus Christ (Sola Gratia).
- We believe through Christ alone we are saved (Solus Christus).
- We believe all things must be done to the Glory of God alone (Soli Deo Gloria).
- We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning, the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18, 7:2-5, Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no

intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

- We believe the differences between male and female, including biological differences, are divinely ordained, integral to God's design for self-conception as male or female, and meant for human good. Therefore, the rejection of one's biological sex and adoption of a transgender self-conception is inconsistent with God's holy purposes in creation and a departure from Christian faithfulness and witness.
- We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Ps. 139).

Philosophy of Education

Consistent with our name, we strive to teach students how to view their world and their lives through the Bible and to make decisions based on this guidance.

It is the purpose of the school to provide an excellent academic program permeated with Christian love and faith. Each person affiliated with the school is capable and well trained for their task and has a deep concern for the spiritual development of the students.

VCS attempts to establish and maintain an atmosphere that encourages growth in personal faith in Christ and the building of Christian character. VCS is unique because it presents and develops a distinctively biblical worldview in its curriculum and discipline systems. The school prepares students not only for college academics but for "works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Eph. 4:12). The Bible presents the explicit view that God created the universe, its laws, and human beings. Sin, redemption and reconciliation are concepts that the Bible presents to describe God's view of the human condition. Christ, the Son of God, is the answer to the human condition of sinfulness. VCS is governed by this biblical message and recognizes the Creator and Redeemer God. The Bible declares, "the knowledge of God is the beginning of wisdom" (Pro. 15:3). VCS seeks to integrate the knowledge of God's creation with training in righteous living to develop true wisdom and character in students.

As God's children, life only makes sense when we recognize that Jesus is Lord of everything. Romans 11:36 is very clear on this when it states, "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever." At VCS, our prayer is that our students will identify and develop their God-given talents to live a life of service for the Lord.

Statement of Objectives

1. To enroll students who have accepted Christ as their personal Savior and to nurture their Christian character
2. To study Scripture as the only inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God
3. To study all subjects through the light of God's Word
4. To help students confront the sin in their lives and respond obediently to Christ
5. To encourage students to develop Christian maturity by involvement in or with school

activities

6. To equip students to be active witnesses for Christ
7. To emphasize high standards of morality
8. To train and discipline students with Christ's redemptive love
9. To prepare and train students for college
10. To train students to be responsible citizens
11. To challenge students to use their abilities to their fullest potential
12. To motivate students to research and seek out answers independently
13. To encourage student creativity

Expected Student Outcomes (ESOs)

1. ACADEMIC OUTCOMES – Intellectual Achievement

Students should:

- a. Be well prepared in all academic disciplines, including mathematics, science, Bible, English, social studies, fine arts, applied arts, and foreign languages.
- b. Be skilled in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking.
- c. Be able to enter the post-secondary institution of their choice (HS).
- d. Demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning by developing critical thinking skills, valuing reading, using good problem-solving and decision-making skills, and engaging in the open exchange of ideas.
- e. Know how to utilize available resources including technology to find, analyze, and evaluate information.

2. SPIRITUAL OUTCOMES – Personal Beliefs and Behaviors

Students should:

- a. Love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and be empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- b. Know and defend a Biblical worldview and the Christian faith.
- c. Know and apply God's Word to daily life.
- d. Exemplify Christ by pursuing a life of faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love.
- e. Treat their body as a temple of the Holy Spirit.
- f. Be active in a local church.

3. SOCIAL OUTCOMES – Beliefs and Behaviors Toward Others

Students should:

- a. Serve others as their service to Christ.
- b. Respect and relate appropriately to others at home, school, work, and society; demonstrating integrity, justice, mercy, and peacemaking, recognizing that every person has worth because they bear the image of God.

- c. Apply Christian principles such as loving others, carrying out the Great Commission, loving God's Word, and living a life based on prayer.
- d. Demonstrate responsible, Biblical citizenship – understanding and engaging in appropriate social and political activities, appreciating, and properly managing God's creation, and understanding that work has dignity as an expression of the nature of God.
- e. Implement Biblical personal values such as a commitment to healthy family living and proper stewardship of personal resources such as time, talents, and wealth.

4. PHYSICAL OUTCOMES – Beliefs about the Physical Body and Physical Fitness

Students should:

- a. Treat their bodies as a temple of the Holy Spirit.
- b. Present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.
- c. Strengthen their bodies through physical education, extracurricular activities, and athletic competition.

Biblical Positions

- **Bible Teaching Policy**

Since VCS is a non-denominational school, is not affiliated with any one church, and because we recognize that we serve families from many different backgrounds, we attempt to emphasize those matters of doctrine upon which we agree rather than emphasize those matters upon which there is disagreement among sincere Protestant Christians. The school has a general doctrinal statement that agrees with orthodox, conservative, Protestant Christianity. Aside from the fundamentals of the faith, which are written in our doctrinal statement, we do not dwell upon the specifics of any group or denomination, and we ask that students do the same.

- **Genesis Doctrinal Statement**

VCS promotes the following interpretation of the first eleven chapters of Genesis. God created the entire world and all that is living. This was a divine act with every step directed by His hand. The whole of the Bible is infallible, meaning all events and characters as recorded in its writing are historical, true, and real. God created man unique and in His own image God created man for the purpose of glorifying Him and serving on His behalf. (This rules out any possibility that man could have had any evolutionary forbearers or evolved from another state). Adam and Eve fell into sin and the whole of humanity was made sinful by this act.

- **Spiritual Emphasis**

The Board of Directors urges parents to recognize their scriptural responsibility (Deut. 6:1-9, Ps. 78:5, 6, Pro. 22:6) to provide their children with a Protestant Christian education and to understand that the primary responsibility for this task rests with the parents (Eph. 6:4). VCS was

founded on and continues to operate upon Biblical values and the desire and commitment for Bible-believing Christian parents to enroll their children in an intentionally Protestant Christian environment. VCS considers admission for students from families who are willing to support Valley Christian's philosophy of Protestant Christian education, student conduct requirements, and the school's

above-stated positions, and who are willing to allow their children to be educated and influenced in an intentionally protestant Christian environment. Continued enrollment at VCS is contingent upon this same understanding and support.

- Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning. It is sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has prohibited intimate sexual activity outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, and attempting to change one's biological sex or otherwise acting upon any disagreement with one's biological sex) or advocacy of sexual immorality, is sinful and offensive to God. If a student advocates or practices lifestyles outlined in this paragraph and does not repent of it, they likely will not be retained as a student at VCS.

Respect for Country, Flag, and National Anthem

At VCS, we hold a foundational belief in showing respect for our country, its flag, and the national anthem. These symbols represent the freedoms and opportunities we are privileged to enjoy in the United States of America. We believe that demonstrating respect for these symbols honors the countless sacrifices made by the men and women who have served and continue to serve to protect those freedoms.

Therefore, at events where the national anthem is played, we ask all in attendance to stand in recognition of the liberties and values our flag represents. This act of unity is a visible expression of gratitude and respect for our nation and those who defend it.

We also acknowledge that our country is not without its challenges and injustices. We recognize that members of our community may feel compelled to draw attention to these issues. In light of this, we humbly and respectfully ask that our community stand together during the anthem to honor the freedoms it symbolizes – including the freedom of speech and the right to peaceful protest – and that any expressions of those freedoms take place following the conclusion of the anthem.

ADMISSIONS/WITHDRAWALS

Nondiscrimination Policy

Subject to the Constitution of the United States and all applicable state and federal laws, VCS admits students of any race, color, and 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, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

To be considered for enrollment, the student must meet the following standards: student and parents must agree with the mission, statement of faith, school policies, and handbook. Student must want to attend Valley Christian and demonstrate an aptitude to meet the school's expectations.

Human Diversity Statement

At VCS we recognize and celebrate "Human Diversity." This is to say that we recognize and celebrate the beauty and truth that all people are created in the image of God and because of that have inherent equal value.

A person's ethnic and cultural heritage is part of God's gift of individuality and a testimony of how much God values diversity within His creation. At VCS, we celebrate God's creativity and the diversity of His creation within the student body and school community.

Any display of bigotry or racism will not be tolerated at VCS. School discipline and consequences should be expected for any student who is responsible for any inappropriate racist behavior.

Application Criteria

The following criteria is used when evaluating students who apply to Valley Christian Schools. To be considered for enrollment, the student must meet the following standards:

- Students and parents must agree with the mission, statement of faith, school policies, and handbook.
- Student must want to attend Valley Christian and demonstrate an aptitude to meet the school's expectations.
- VCS is a covenant Christian school. This means that a member(s) of each family that attends VCS must know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. This includes:

For students entering high school:

- High school students and parents must have a Christian testimony and a church reference.

For students entering K-8:

- K-8 parents must have a testimony and church reference.
- A child must be five years old by September 1 to be eligible for kindergarten.

Withdrawal Process

If your intent is to not return the following academic year, you must submit this notification through the online *Intent to Withdraw Form*. If this form is submitted through the 30-day Opt-out period, a Continuous Enrollment fee will not be charged to your account per child(ren).

Each year, parents will have a 30-day opt-out period that begins when tuition is released and announced. If you decide you do not want your child to remain enrolled for the next school year, simply complete the online *Intent to Withdraw Form* during the opt-out period.

Please note that this form notifies Valley Christian Schools that your child will not be returning for the next school year. This is not the official withdrawal that initiates records requests and the closing of accounts. This must go through the registrar's office. Please contact the registrar's office at your campus to initiate this transfer of records at the appropriate time. Also, this form is not to be used for current-year withdrawals.

GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Behavior Response and Communication Protocol

This protocol outlines general guidance for the progressive steps taken by teachers and administration to address student behavior concerns. Each step includes example misbehaviors, the responsible party, and guidance on parent communication. As a school, we work hard to be as consistent as possible when addressing behavior, while also understanding that each student and each situation include different context, frequency, and circumstances. This protocol is not intended to be fully exhaustive or descriptive. VCS Administration reserves the right to determine, at their sole discretion, how behaviors are logged in accordance with this protocol.

Restorative discipline: At Valley Christian, our aim is to walk alongside students in establishing appropriate, Christ-honoring behavior. At times, that means an immediate consequence, and other times, that requires reaching the heart issue behind the infraction. When we speak with students and plan interventions and consequences, we are considering which will most effectively disciple the student in their walk with Jesus. Our goal is always restorative through repentance, prayer and, if necessary, mediation and consequences.

Type of Behavior Infraction	Example Behaviors	School Response/Consequences	Parent Notification	Responsible Party
Minor Behaviors (Classroom Managed)	Class disruption, minor disrespect, roughhousing, off task behavior, minor rule infraction (chewing gum, misuse of tech, classroom expectations, etc.), unkind words or behavior, minor physical aggression (pushing, grabbing, etc.), inappropriate language, etc.	Low-Level	As appropriate	Teacher
Moderate Behaviors or Repeated Minor Behaviors (Office-Managed)	Significant disrespect, act of aggression, unsafe behavior, minor threats, insults, damage to school property, minor theft, dishonesty, PDA, etc.	Low to Mid-Level	Email or phone call (Possible meeting)	Teacher/Admin
Major Behaviors or Repeated Minor or Moderate Behaviors (Office-Managed)	Significant threats, possession of drugs/paraphernalia, racial/ sexual/ disability/ other insults or slurs (considered by age and maturity), sexual harassment, fighting or harm to others, damaging school property, lewd or sexual behavior, repeated and targeted bullying, etc.	Mid to High-Level	Call home / Parent meeting	Admin

School Consequences		
Low-level Consequences	Mid-Level Consequences	High-Level Consequences
In-class Intervention Temporarily moved outside door/hallway Item Confiscation Student Conference Student Apology Community Service Lunch Detention Assigned by Teacher Loss of Privileges	After School Detention Removal from Classroom (Office) Behavior Support Plan Parent Conference Restitution Restorative Practice such as Special Assignment Lunch Detention/Service Assigned by Administration In School Suspension	Out of School Suspension Academic Contract Behavior Contract Expulsion/Request for Withdrawal

Additional Notes:

- "Moderate Behaviors," "Major Behaviors," and repeated "Minor Behaviors" are typically documented in the behavior section of our school's Student Information System (RenWeb).
- Specific disciplinary procedures are in place for violations related to, but not limited to, academic honesty, dress code, iPad and personal device usage, and substance abuse policies.

Child Safety Guiding Principles

VCS believes the Bible teaches that all persons, male and female, adult and child, are created in the image of God and therefore are worthy of respect. (Gen. 1: 26, 27). Women and men are equal in the sight of God (Gal. 3:28). The human body is good, including human sexuality (1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19, 2 Cor. 6:16). Through the fall of humanity into sin, the goodness of God's creation was distorted; the evil of abuse and neglect are results of the fall. VCS strives for excellence in caring for the intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of each student in his/her life-long pursuit of learning. VCS strives to provide a safe and secure learning environment.

VCS is committed to the protection of children and to provide a healing environment for those whose lives have been affected by the sin of abuse.

We recognize that we live in a broken world and that abuse and neglect also could occur within a school. Abuse of any kind will not be tolerated. As a community, VCS is committed to prevent abuse and to foster the development of healthy relationships. Appropriate steps will be taken to prevent abuse, and if it occurs, appropriate action will be taken. As a Christian school we acknowledge what the Bible teaches concerning the legitimate mandate of local authorities, and we pledge to cooperate with them in seeking justice in abuse.

Reporting Child Abuse

In accordance with A.R.S. 13-3620, school personnel are required to report to a peace officer or to child protective services any reasonable grounds to believe a child is the victim of physical or sexual abuse. The school will not contact parents before making a report to authorities. The law is clear on the duty of

school personnel to report, and there is no legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation.

Homework Expectations Policy

Valley Christian Schools partners with parents and the local church to accomplish our mission of equipping students to be culture changers for Christ. We have intentionally established homework guidelines and expectations to provide a framework for what students and parents can expect from VCS and vice versa. Like our entire academic program, the use of homework is most effective alongside partnership between the student, parents, teachers, and administration.

Our homework expectations policy seeks to:

- Clearly set out and communicate homework expectations and guidelines for students, parents, and teachers by grade level
- Ensure a consistent approach and shared understanding between all members of the learning community

Research and Training

Our own research, and our understanding of global research, on homework indicates the following:

- High quality homework assignments, especially those assigned purposefully and clearly linked to learning objectives, foster high academic achievement
- Competence and confidence are established best when tasks are appropriately challenging without generating undue frustration
- Rigor is not equal to workload
- Low quality homework assignments do not foster high academic achievement

Not surprisingly, the value of homework is most closely tied with the quality of the homework. VCS spends intentional time throughout the year training teachers on best practices to create high quality homework assignments. Outside of major projects with long lead times over multiple weeks, homework is generally not given on weekends or over school holidays.

Rationale of VCS Homework Policy

1. We value the importance of homework as an intentional element of learning, seeking to:
 - Revisit recently taught materials to facilitate retention
 - Further develop students' independent learning skills
 - Extend and enrich the learning from the classroom
 - Pave the way for students to synthesize information and become independent, autonomous, and effective learners
2. Student learning is enhanced when homework is:
 - Purposefully designed to meet specific learning goals
 - Able to reinforce knowledge, skills, and understanding developed in class

- Appropriately challenging, engaging, and relevant
3. We also value our partnership with parents and the local church, so we encourage:
- Family time
 - Church and youth involvement
 - Involvement in sports, performing arts, other extracurricular activities, volunteering, and – at the HS level or when appropriate – part-time work

Expectations for Students

A student's responsibilities for homework, as developmentally appropriate:

- Copy all assignments carefully, asking for help if the assignment or due date is not clear.
- Set aside a time and space each day to complete homework.
- Maintain the highest quality work on homework assignments.
- Take home all necessary resources, such as packets, textbooks, notes, and study guides.
- Submit homework when it is due.
- Be responsible for getting assignments when absent from school.
- Be responsible for taking care of, and returning, any borrowed resource materials.
- Take initiative to get work from teachers and complete assignments that were missed due to extracurricular activities like athletics, fine arts, student council, etc.

Expectations for Parents/Caregivers

Parents have access to all assigned homework through RenWeb. The time allocation noted in this policy is our best effort to estimate approximate homework times and *will not be representative of every student*. If your student regularly exceeds these timeframes, we highly encourage you to share this with your student's teacher(s), so you can discuss what solutions may help your student manage his/her homework better.

A VCS parent's responsibilities for homework:

- Promote a positive attitude toward homework as part of the learning process.
- Understand and reinforce expectations for the quality of student work.
- Provide structure, a clean and focused area, and tools needed to help your child organize and complete homework.
- Be available to provide supervision and support while allowing your child to do the bulk of the thinking and work.
- Communicate regularly with your child and his/her teacher, providing feedback to the teacher with any homework concerns.

Notes for High School students

Homework at the high school level varies significantly based on the classes each student is taking. Our grade-level teachers meet regularly to discuss major tests and projects and do their best not to overlap. Despite these efforts, given that students take 6-8 classes at a time and every student's class schedule is

unique, there will be times when major tests and projects overlap. At the end of each semester, 3-5 days are set aside for high school students to take their semester finals.

Notes for VINE students

Homework guidelines for students with special needs may be determined by the VINE Director in conjunction with the Campus Principal. These modifications/accommodations, if any, should be specifically stated in the student's individual learning plan (ILP) or Accommodation Plan. This information will be communicated to both teachers and families, as needed.

Time Allocation

Families should anticipate 5-10 minutes per grade level on nightly homework (not including special circumstances like projects, make-up work, etc).

A synthesis of the decades of research on homework indicates a bell curve of achievement and learning for students. In other words, either a lack of any time or an overabundance of time spent on homework typically results in lower achievement. The "sweet spot" for maximum academic growth is a modest amount of time on homework.

Grade Level	Approx. Time/Night	Regular Homework Tasks
K	10-15 min	Weekly Bible verse memorization (oral recitation) Weekly math practice packets (typically sent home on Mondays) Minimal family projects w/ extended due dates <i>Additionally, 40 min of reading per week, inc. work on sight words and phonograms</i>
1 st -2 nd	10-20 min	Weekly Bible verse memorization (oral recitation) Daily math practice Some long-term projects with extended due dates (e.g. book reports, quarterly social studies or science projects) <i>Additionally, 45-90 min of reading/week, inc. weekly spelling and phonogram practice</i>
3 rd -4 th	25-40 min	Weekly Bible verse memorization (written) Weekly spelling practice Daily math practice Completing any assignments not finished in class Long-term projects with extended due dates (e.g. quarterly book reports, science and social studies projects) <i>Additionally, 1-2 hours of reading/week (to complete book reports)</i>
5 th -6 th	40-60 min	Weekly Bible verse memorization (written) Daily math practice Weekly reading practice for novel studies Completing any assignments not finished in class

		Studying for assessments in each class Long-term projects with extended due dates (e.g. extended writing projects, science and social studies projects, Bible class projects) <i>Additionally, 1-2 hours of reading/week (to complete book reports)</i>
7 th -8 th	45-75 min	Weekly Bible verse memorization (written) Daily math review and practice Weekly reading practice for novel studies Completing any assignments not finished in class Studying for assessments in each class Long-term projects with extended due dates (e.g. extended writing projects, science and social studies projects, Bible class projects) <i>Additionally, 1-2 hours of reading/week (to complete book reports)</i>
HS	1.0-2.0 hrs	Approximately 10-20 minutes per subject per day, with more homework typically assigned for core subjects and Advanced Placement (AP) classes.

This table provides an estimate of a student's homework each week, but times will vary by student and throughout the year.

Length of Day & School Year

The normal school days at VCS are as follows:

Grade Level	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri.	Wed.
Lower Elementary K-4	8:30 – 3:10	8:30 – 1:30
Middle School/Junior High	8:20 – 3:30	8:20 – 1:30
High School	8:00 – 3:10	8:00 – 2:10

Please review the school calendar (valleychristianaz.org, select “Calendar” at the top) for any holidays, early releases, or other modified days. The school year typically includes 180 days in which students are in class for more than half of the day. Teacher and staff in-service times are adjusted annually by the school's administration.

Lunch Ordering

Families can log into the Family Portal and order lunch for their student(s). As soon as the order is submitted through Family Portal, it displays in FACTS SIS. If the order is changed in FACTS SIS, the change is immediately reflected on the Family Portal.

- Lunch orders for the following week are due by 11:59pm on the previous Thursday.
- Lunch credits are not given.
- Bottled water comes with each meal.
- Lunch Questions: Contact our Lunch Operations Coordinator.

Logo Use and Representation of VCS

The school logos and name are federally registered marks of VCS and may not be used or reproduced without express written authorization from the VCS Marketing and Communications Department. Any effort to represent the school or group, whether in name only or with accompanying logos, must be expressly authorized prior to use (Ex: Valley Christian Parents Group or Valley Christian school group on social media; Valley Christian logos or name on custom apparel).

Personal Hygiene

Students are expected to use good personal hygiene. This includes bathing daily, wearing deodorant, and wearing clean clothes to school. If student hygiene continues to be an issue, this may result in the office or member of the administration requesting a meeting with the parent and student to come up with a reasonable but effective solution.

Pet Policy

The only animals allowed in and on school property are service animals and therapy animals; animals that support an instructional lesson; and – at the discretion of the teacher – turtles, fish, or frogs kept in clean and maintained aquariums. The use of service animals must comply with all state regulations.

Pregnancy and the Sanctity of Human Life

VCS holds firmly to the biblical teaching that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image; human life is, therefore, of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 9:3-6; Job 31:15; Psalm 139:13-16). While premarital sex is wrong, the pregnancy is a gift from God. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. A student who facilitates, actively supports, and/or participates in terminating a pregnancy while enrolled at VCS may be subject to withdrawal or expulsion at the discretion of the administration.

Our hope and prayer for each of our students is that they choose to honor the Lord by remaining sexually abstinent until marriage. Scripture is clear that sexual immorality is a sin (Hebrews 13:4). Scripture is also clear that all have sinned (Romans 3:23). Although we strive and desire to be Christ-like, we sometimes act in sinful and self-serving ways; such is the case with sexual immorality.

If a pregnancy results from the sexual activity of a VCS student, it is of utmost importance that the sanctity of human life is honored. VCS does not condone sex outside the confines of marriage, nor does it condone abortion. Life is a gift from God and should be treasured as such. Life should always be celebrated, preserved, and protected.

When a student makes VCS aware that they have become pregnant or caused a pregnancy (with a VCS or non-VCS student), it is the policy of the school to intervene and to make resulting decisions prayerfully on a case-by-case basis. The school's intervention, designed to be restorative in nature, is intended to encourage an atmosphere of compassion and support so that a student is strengthened in the decision to preserve the pregnancy and protect the unborn.

For a pregnant student wishing to continue at VCS, the process is as follows:

1. Notification: School administration must be notified of the pregnancy as soon as possible. The student(s), parents, and appropriate school administration will arrange a meeting. The purpose of the meeting is for the administration and the families involved to work cooperatively to come to an agreement regarding what is the healthiest and best education option moving forward. Ultimately, school administration holds the right to make the final decision.
2. Establish paternity: The female must identify the father of her child (unless circumstances do not allow it). If he is also a student at VCS, or if a male student causes a pregnancy with a non-VCS student, this policy and any resulting intervention governs both male and female students in a similar manner.
3. Repentance and forgiveness: The student must express authentic repentance for the sexual sin and seek reconciliation with God and others impacted. The student must display a positive, wholesome Christian attitude and must strive to maintain sexual purity as defined by the Bible from this point forward, knowing that if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)
4. Continued education: The school's administration will work with the student and the student's parents to establish guidelines for student participation in school activities, including ongoing education. Options for continued education may include:
 - a. Continued instruction at VCS.
 - b. "At home" instruction whereby the student continues coursework provided by VCS, with limited VCS teacher supervision.
 - c. Some combination of continued instruction and coursework taken at home or another institution.
 - d. Withdrawal from VCS and recommended enrollment elsewhere.

In all cases, VCS will work with the family to make a successful transition to resume or continue the student's education during the pregnancy period. The school administration reserves the right to make the decision about continued current enrollment, reenrollment for the following semester, or for any future semesters.

5. Expectations

- a. If the student remains at VCS in any capacity, academic excellence and attendance, as appropriate, must remain consistent while enrolled.
- b. If the student is allowed to remain a student at VCS, the safety of the mother and the (unborn) child will be acknowledged in all decisions for the school regarding curricular and extracurricular activities.

c. VCS recommends that the student participates in ongoing Christian counseling and mentorship to maintain their physical (prenatal, post-natal), mental, and spiritual health. Counseling should continue until and beyond the birth of the child.

d. VCS will not be held liable to provide an enrolled student with childcare or other similar benefits.

e. In most cases, the student may participate in the graduation ceremony on the same basis as any other student.

Under extenuating or tragic circumstances, including but not limited to non-consensual criminal activity or an extreme health risk to the mother, VCS may adjust these policies accordingly, while remaining consistent with our statement of faith and overall policies.

Public Display of Affection (PDA)

We believe that proper, God-glorifying relationships between young men and women should be encouraged. While we recognize that our Biblical standards may be outside what modern society encourages and promotes, we will continue to promote high standards of moral and ethical conduct. The school will not permit students to participate in PDA or "prolonged contact" of any kind whatsoever.

K-8: No public display of romantic affection (PDA) is allowed. This includes placing arms around the person, holding hands, playing with hair, or placing hands anywhere on another individual while at school or any school activity on or off campus.

High School: Inappropriate public displays of romantic affection will not be tolerated. Holding hands will be the limit of body contact. Violations will result in a consequence.

Security and Emergencies

Valley Christian School is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all students, faculty, and staff. We continuously evaluate and enhance our safety protocols, implementing additional layers of protection whenever prudent and feasible.

Each of our campuses is equipped with the following security measures:

- Armed Campus Security Officers who are present during school hours and events.
- Security cameras that provide both live and recorded footage to assist in monitoring an incident response.
- Supervised drop-off and pick-up procedures to ensure student safety during high traffic times.
- Standardized visitor check-in process to control and monitor campus access.

We also maintain strong working relationships with local police and fire departments to support our emergency preparedness and response efforts.

Valley Christian Schools has established comprehensive Emergency Management Procedures, which are regularly reviewed and practiced through scheduled drills. These drills help ensure that students, faculty, and staff are familiar with the appropriate protocols in the event of an emergency.

In the event of an actual emergency, parents will be notified via text message through our RenWeb Alert system to ensure timely and accurate communication.

It is imperative that students follow the instructions of faculty or staff members during any drill or emergency to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone on campus.

Student Property Search Policy (K–12)

To maintain a safe, orderly, and Christ-centered learning environment, Valley Christian Schools (the School) reserves the right to conduct searches of student property and School premises in accordance with School policy, applicable law, and the School's mission.

Students and their parents or legal guardians acknowledge that enrollment at the School is voluntary and constitutes acceptance of this Student Property Search Policy. This Policy is incorporated into and forms part of the enrollment agreement and contractual relationship between the School and the student's family. As a condition of enrollment and continued attendance, students, parents, and/or legal guardians consent to the School's authority to conduct reasonable searches as described in this Policy of student property, personal belongings, electronic devices, vehicles, and other items brought onto School property or to School-sponsored activities.

Students and their parents or legal guardians further acknowledge that property brought onto School property or to School-sponsored activities may be subject to search in accordance with this Policy. As a result, students have a diminished expectation of privacy with respect to such property while on School property or participating in School-sponsored activities.

I. General Authority to Search (All Grades K–12)

A. Scope of Search

The School may search, at its discretion:

- Lockers, desks, and School-owned storage areas
- Backpacks, purses, bags, and other personal containers
- Student vehicles located on School property (High School only where applicable)
- Electronic devices brought onto School property or to School-sponsored activities, including cellular telephones, tablets, laptops, and similar devices
- Any personal property brought onto School campus or School-sponsored events
- The contents of a student's outer-clothing pockets by directing the student to empty the pockets and display their contents

B. Electronic Devices

The School may temporarily take possession of electronic devices and search such devices when reasonably necessary to investigate misconduct, enforce School policies, protect health and safety, maintain order and discipline, protect School property, or further the School's educational mission.

When reasonably related to the purpose of a search, searches may include review of content stored locally on an electronic device, including photographs, videos, documents, call logs, or other information reasonably believed to

be relevant to the matter under investigation. Any review shall be limited in scope to information reasonably related to the purpose of the search.

Absent separate consent, legal process, or other authority recognized by law, the School will not require students to provide passwords for, or access to, personal email accounts, social media accounts, cloud-storage accounts, or other third-party electronic communication services that are not owned, operated, or provided by the School.

The School may require a student to present an electronic device for inspection and may request reasonable cooperation in connection with a search conducted pursuant to this Policy. Failure to cooperate may result in disciplinary action.

Except in emergency circumstances involving a threat to health, safety, or security, any search of the contents of a student's electronic device must be approved in advance by the Head of School, Principal, Dean of Students, or another administrator designated by the School. The approving administrator shall determine that the search is authorized under this Policy and reasonably related to a legitimate School purpose before the search is conducted.

C. Basis of Search

Searches may be conducted when the School reasonably determines that a search is necessary to:

- Protect student and staff safety
- Enforce School rules and behavioral expectations
- Investigate suspected misconduct or policy violations
- Maintain order and discipline
- Protect School property and the property of others
- Support the School's Christian mission and learning environment

Individual Searches

The School may conduct a search directed at a particular student or the student's property when the School has reasonable suspicion that the search will reveal evidence relevant to a purpose identified above.

Safety and Administrative Searches

In appropriate circumstances, the School may conduct broader administrative or safety-based searches without reasonable suspicion as to a particular student when reasonably necessary to address one or more of the purposes identified above.

D. Confiscation of Items

The School may confiscate items that are:

- Prohibited under School rules
- Illegal or unsafe
- Evidence of misconduct
- Disruptive to the learning environment

Confiscated items may be retained, returned to the student or parent/guardian, transferred to law enforcement when appropriate, or otherwise disposed of in accordance with applicable law and School policy.

E. Searches conducted under this Policy will be carried out with attention to:

- Student dignity and respect
- Safety and appropriate supervision
- Limiting the scope of the search to what is reasonably necessary under the circumstances

Searches will not be conducted in a manner intended to embarrass, harass, intimidate, or improperly single out a student.

F. Law Enforcement Involvement

The School may involve law enforcement when:

- Required by law
- There is suspected criminal activity
- There is an immediate threat to safety

The School will comply with lawful court orders, warrants, subpoenas, and other legal process as required by law.

G. Refusal to Cooperate

A student's refusal to comply with an authorized search directive, including a direction to empty the student's pockets, may result in discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion, in accordance with School policy. The School may temporarily separate and supervise the student while contacting the student's parent or guardian and determining the appropriate response. The School may contact law enforcement when there is a reasonable basis to believe that the student possesses illegal drugs, a weapon, or other dangerous contraband.

II. Developmental Application by Grade Level

A. Elementary School (Grades K–5)

Because younger students require greater structure, supervision, and adult guidance, searches in K through 5 are typically **administrative and safety-based rather than investigative**.

The School may conduct searches when:

- Items are visible or the School has reasonable suspicion that items violate School rules
- There is a safety concern (e.g., weapons, unsafe objects, prohibited items)
- There is a need to locate missing or misappropriated property
- A student's behavior or other circumstances create a reasonable concern for student welfare, safety, or compliance with School rules

K–5 Search Approach:

- Searches will be handled primarily by School administration or designee
- Searches will be conducted in a calm, age-appropriate manner
- When reasonably feasible, another staff member will be present during the search
- Efforts will be made to minimize disruption and emotional distress

The School will make reasonable efforts to notify parents or guardians when a search relates to a significant safety concern, alleged misconduct, disciplinary matter, or other matter warranting parental involvement. Routine administrative searches and minor incidents may not require separate parental notification. The timing and manner of any notification will be determined by the School based on the circumstances presented.

Refusal to comply may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or dismissal.

B. Middle School and High School (Grades 6–12)

Students in grades 6 through 12 are afforded increasing independence and personal responsibility but remain subject to School rules, supervision, and the search authority set forth in this Policy.

- Consistent with the search standards set forth elsewhere in this Policy, searches involving students in grades 6 through 12 may be conducted when reasonably necessary to investigate misconduct, address safety concerns, enforce school rules, protect school property, or maintain discipline and order.

Grades 6–12 Search Approach:

- Searches may be conducted based on reasonable suspicion or, in appropriate circumstances, without reasonable suspicion as to a particular student consistent with this Policy
- School administrators will determine the scope and timing of searches based on the circumstances presented
- Searches may be conducted with or without student presence if appropriate
- Searches should be limited to areas reasonably related to the concern
- When reasonably feasible, another staff member will be present during the search
- Students who choose to bring electronic devices onto School property or to School sponsored events do so subject to the School's authority to search such devices in accordance with this Policy
- Students who choose to bring vehicles onto School property or to School sponsored events do so subject to the School's authority to search such vehicles in accordance with this Policy

Refusal to comply may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or dismissal.

Sickness and Medication

VCS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students. A student exhibiting any of the following symptoms should not attend school.

- A fever without medication, in the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea twice within the last 48 hours
- Vomiting twice within the last 48 hours
- Persistent cough
- An unexplained or undiagnosed rash
- Pink eye/conjunctivitis – pink to red, itchy eyes with a discharge

General Notes

- Head Lice

If the school determines that a student has headlice, he or she will be sent home to be treated. The student will be allowed to return to school once treatment is complete and he or she is cleared by the nurse or other school personnel. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice. When a report of lice or nits is made, all students in that classroom will be examined. If nits or lice are found on a student, the child's family will be discreetly notified, and appropriate treatment is required to return lice/nit-free to school. A notice will also be sent home to all families of a given classroom or grade level if lice is found with any student(s). Before returning to school, the student must be checked by the school nurse or authorized personnel.

- General Illnesses

Designated office personnel provide episodic and long-term care as required congruent to the level of their training. Episodic care is defined as care that is given on an unplanned, unscheduled basis for a problem which may be acute. Long-term care is defined as planned, goal-directed care designed to provide symptomatic treatment, maintenance, and or rehabilitation, based upon the needs, resources, and readiness of the student (and family) to participate in the care plan. The health office is required by law (ARS 36-621) to report suspect cases of infectious and communicable diseases to the local health department. The Arizona Department of Health Services has established guidelines for handling specific communicable diseases.

- Injury Protocol

Parents will be notified with a Medical Event Notification by email of any injury that or medical need that requires treatment. Parents will be phoned for any injury that occurs to the head, as well as receiving a Medical Event Notification by email. VCS has 2 registered nurses on staff on our Tempe campus. If the school nurse is not on campus when an injury occurs, first aid will be provided by a VCS staff member congruent with the staff member's level of training. If this is not available, a call will be made to seek the services of trained personnel to include emergency services (911).

- Immunizations

In accordance with Arizona Revised Statutes §§ 15-871 through 15-874 and Arizona Administrative Code R9-6-701 through R9-6-708, all students attending VCS must have documentation of required immunizations or a valid Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) exemption form on file.

Students who are not compliant with immunization requirements, are not in approved catch-up status, and do not have a valid exemption on file shall be excluded from school attendance until compliance is met, as required by state law.

Acceptable documentation includes:

- Official immunization records meeting Arizona requirements;
- A completed ADHS medical exemption form signed by a licensed healthcare provider;

- A completed ADHS personal belief exemption form signed by a parent or guardian; Verbal assurances or incomplete documentation do not meet state requirements. The school is required to review immunization status at enrollment and annually thereafter.

Medications

- Prescription Medications

The school will follow legal guidelines when dispensing prescription medication during school hours. The following legal requirements must be met:

- The parents must sign a consent form (renewed annually) requesting that the school nurse or other designated personnel administer the medication during school hours. A new consent form must be submitted if the medication or dosage is changed.
- The medication must be in its original container and labeled by the pharmacy with the student's name, medication, directions for use, prescriber's name, and date of prescription.
- The original prescription label serves as the prescriber's order since the prescription is on file in the pharmacy.
- According to the Arizona Legislature, there is a law that allows students to possess and self-administer handheld inhaler devices for breathing disorders, if they have written parental consent to do so. If a child uses an inhaler, and you wish him/her to have this privilege, please contact the office and fill out a Medication Request Form.
- All inhalers must be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name.
- Any student bringing prescribed medication to school is to leave the medication in the nurse's office with the appropriate instructions for administering the medication. Any prescription medication or drug found with a student will be confiscated until proper information can be obtained. Medication will not be administered unless the school office or nurse has been notified appropriately. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) and the student to follow these instructions.

- Non-Prescription Medications

Written permission from the parent for the administration of non-prescription medications will be kept on file in the health office and in RenWeb. If written permission is not available, verbal permission may be acceptable but is not preferred. This verbal permission will be noted in the health record via RenWeb. The dosage requested by the parent must be consistent with the manufacturer's recommendations. School personnel may first use other methods of treatment before deciding to give medications, i.e., ice packs, rest, cough drops. Any decision regarding the necessity of medication will be the responsibility of the school nurse or other designated staff members.

Student Records

Student records are confidential and are only available to school personnel who are directly involved with the academic affairs of a student. These files are not available to other parents or individuals. In the case of a divorce or separation, a noncustodial parent shall have the right to access school academic records related to his or her student unless prohibited by a legally binding instrument. At the time of enrollment parents shall provide all relevant documents concerning custody or visitation and have an ongoing duty to provide any documents and information relevant to a change in current rights to custody or visitation. VCS has no responsibility to provide financial records to the non-fiduciary parent. Any other party must present legal verification that they have equal rights.

Technology Use Policy

This policy defines the boundaries of acceptable use of VCS computing and communication resources, including computers, devices, electronic data, networks, services, information sources, communication services, and other communication resources. The VCS Technology Use Policy can be found in its entirety [here](#).

Transportation

Valley Christian Schools provides some designated routes of transportation to school each year. This is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange with the VCS Transportation department. The applications to participate and more information can be found at valleychristianaz.org/Transportation.

Use of Music/School Events

VCS believes that a Christian should be selective in the kind of music one enjoys. To maintain this standard, it is necessary at school events to avoid playing music that has lyrics that contain inappropriate language/cursing or have messages that are sexually explicit, have heavy references to drugs or alcohol, are degrading to men or women, are degrading to another race or nationality, or have references of violence.

The school maintains the right to supervise the kind of music performed or played by or for any group of students. Students and owners of vehicles are required to turn down loud music upon entering the school property.

All playlists for events, dances, or performances must be submitted to the appropriate advisors or administration prior to the event for approval.

Visitors/Guests

Visitors to campus must sign in at the front office and wear a Visitor's Badge while on campus. Visitors are not permitted to exit the lobby area unaccompanied without first receiving approval from the office staff. Unless there is an emergency or special circumstance, visitors are generally not able to see students during the school day. All visitors must adhere to the code of conduct and dress. Visitors wishing to meet with a teacher or administration are asked to schedule an appointment prior to arriving on campus.

PARENT PARTNERSHIP

Parental Support and Cooperation

At VCS, partnering with parents is one of our core values. The following guidelines help us maintain that healthy partnership.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parents are encouraged to attend scheduled parent/teacher conferences. During these meetings, teachers are prepared to discuss student progress using current grades and samples of student work.

In addition to scheduled all school conferences, ad-hoc meetings may be arranged at any time by parents, teachers, or administrators as needed. Teachers are expected to maintain regular communication with parents and should initiate a conference if a student is at risk of failing or facing other academic or behavioral concerns.

Grievance Policy and The Matthew 18 Principle

A Christian school is made up of people – parents, administrators, teachers, and students. Like any other collection of people, those at a Christian school have the potential for misunderstanding, disagreement, and even wrongdoing. Nevertheless, it is God's will that we live and work together in harmony. Jesus said, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35).

Due to our human nature, we may at times irritate others, resulting in misunderstandings or strong disagreements. In Matthew 18, Jesus provides His formula for solving person-to-person problems. We refer to this as "The Matthew 18 Principle." Matthew 18 specifically refers to sin issues within the church, but these key concepts and practices should be utilized for all types of disagreements.

Matthew 18: 15-17: "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

There are several clear principles that Jesus taught in solving people-to-people problems:

1. **Keep the matter confidential.** The very pattern of sharing the problem only with those directly involved establishes the principle of confidentiality. The Bible has much to say about those who gossip or malign others with their words. "With their mouths, the godless destroy

their neighbors, but through knowledge the righteous escape." (Pro. 11:9). An overwhelming majority of issues can be solved when discussed only amongst the two parties involved.

2. **Keep the circle small.** "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you..." The first step and most often the only step needed in solving a person-to-person problem is for one of the two people involved to initiate face-to-face dialogue. Most problems are solved at the two-person level. The administration will not give a hearing to disagreements before those directly involved have made a prayerful and earnest attempt to resolve the issue first. Taking an issue or grievance "over the head" of a staff member directly to the administration violates both the letter and spirit of The Matthew 18 Principle.
3. **Be straightforward.** "Point out their fault." Jesus tells us to be forthright and to love honestly. Sometimes it is difficult to be straightforward and tell someone the very heart of the matter. But restoration and improvement can only come when the issues are lovingly, yet clearly, presented. The Scripture says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." (Pro. 27:6)
4. **Be forgiving.** "If they listen to you, you have won them over." This implies that once the matter is resolved, we should wholeheartedly forgive and restore the person whose fault has offended us. Most school problems are resolved at the two-person level. Forgiveness and restoration is the normal, proper conclusion.
5. **If needed, the parent and staff member should agree to share the matter with an appropriate school administrator.** At this stage, the counsel of Jesus would be "take one or two others along, so that "every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." Both the parent and staff member should communicate their version of the issue(s) with the school's administration. Each person should come to the meeting in a spirit of prayer and humility, willing to submit to the Lord's will in the matter and willing to submit to reproof and correction, if needed. Those of us who bear the name of Christ should joyfully conform to the will of Christ. An open and honest discussion among people who are sensitive to godly principles will most often reach an amiable solution.

Because the Board of Directors' policy delegates authority for operational (student, parent, staff, discipline, curricular) decisions to the school's lead administrator (Head of School), his/her decision should be considered final and not subject to review by the Board unless a Board policy has been broken or other extraordinary circumstances.

In summary, The Matthew 18 Principle requires that parents/students talk directly to their teacher, coach, etc. about any specific issues before they talk to an administrator. If unresolved at the two-person level, the matter should then be

prayerfully and systematically moved upward in the school's organizational structure. This is the Lord's way of solving people-to-people problems, and the procedure we follow at VCS related to all disagreements, whether or not they involve a specific sin issue.

Classroom Management Partnership

Valley Christian Schools believes each student is a special person that deserves to be respected (Genesis 1:27). Students need to feel safe and secure at school. Students need to be taught how to interact correctly with others and how to make good choices about their behavior (Proverbs 22:6). If a student chooses to disregard these expectations, there are consequences for their choices. Those consequences may include: a verbal warning, loss of recess/break time, note or phone call to parents, or being sent to the principal's office. If inappropriate behavior continues, a conference with parents will be arranged. For more serious violations, there are further disciplinary actions detailed within this handbook, such as in-school or out-of-school suspension. As students learn to get along with each other and respect those in authority, they will develop into productive citizens who will function well in society. They will also experience a greater sense of security, joy, and peace.

We believe that respect for authority is an essential ingredient to quality education and character development; therefore, our classrooms are controlled with a firm, loving discipline by qualified and dedicated Christian teachers (Hebrews 12:6-11). It is our desire that all our students be controlled with self-discipline in their attitudes and actions. To develop such self-discipline, though, it is necessary for us to teach and train the students in this process. VCS teachers are tasked with the primary responsibility of ensuring that their students behave in a proper and fitting way at school.

We expect parents to maintain a supportive attitude with teachers and administrators and generally support the decisions they make. In the event there is a disagreement, we expect parents to follow the protocols outlined above, with discretion. Most of all, we ask parents to communicate support when talking with their student, to convey unity and respect for authority at school.

Student Rights and Due Process

Inherent in the discipline process is the following:

- Attendance at VCS is a privilege, not a right.
- Students and parents may expect to be treated in a manner that is safe, dignified, Biblical, and handled with appropriate confidentiality.
- Christians are to follow the format laid down in Matt. 18:15-17 to resolve complaints or problems.
- If a student or parent disagrees with a decision or practice at VCS they may follow the established Grievance Policy.

Administrative Investigations of Student Behaviors

To ensure a safe and respectful learning environment, VCS administration may conduct inquiries into student behavior to determine whether school policies have been violated. This process may involve interviewing students and collecting statements. Initial inquiries may be conducted without prior parent notification; however, parents will be contacted at an appropriate time as determined by school leadership. All interactions between staff and students will remain professional and ethical, with the primary goal of maintaining a safe and supportive school community.

Communications

All communications and interaction is expected to be professional and respectful. While we do not want students to suffer the consequences of parent behavior, administration may recommend withdrawal of a student when the parents have been persistently or overtly uncooperative with school staff, policies, regulations, programs, or have interfered in matters of school administration or discipline to the detriment of the school's ability to serve their own or other students. After making a reasonable effort to elicit the minimum requisite parental cooperation, the administrator may require withdrawal. Documentation of the basis for this action and of all consultation with the parents on the matter must be retained on file.

Behavior at Valley Christian Schools Events

Although Valley Christian Schools realizes that adults (parents/guardians) are not bound by the same code of conduct as their children enrolled at Valley Christian Schools, it should be noted that all persons attending VCS-sponsored events (social events, athletic events, etc.) are expected to abide by all school policies pertaining to appropriate behavior. Any person who exhibits inappropriate, rude, unsportsmanlike, and or unchristian behavior may be requested to leave such events at the discretion of the coach, Principal, or those in charge of the event and or any VCS administrator in attendance. All parents and students should refrain from talking or interacting with the coach or players during practice, games, time-outs, halftime, and or coaching from the sidelines.

Gifts to Faculty and Staff from Parents and Students

We are so grateful for our generous VCS community, especially when it is directed to encouraging and blessing our teachers and staff. To maintain integrity in our generosity, gifts to faculty and staff members may not be used for any purpose of influence or coercion to affect a child's assessment results. If a faculty or staff member receives a gift that they believe was intended to coerce them, the faculty or staff member must report the matter to the principal for review and follow-up.

Parent Volunteers

All volunteers must follow all current VCS requirements to volunteer on campus. VCS has an active volunteer organization known as the Valley Christian Volunteer Community (VCVC; valleychristianaz.org/VCVC). Parent volunteers are vital to the healthy development of a school. The standard of conduct for Volunteers is as follows:

- Volunteer work falls under the authority of the activity's coordinator and, subsequently, the authority and direction of the teacher and administration of the school. The teacher, school administration, and likely VCVC must approve all activities.
- Volunteers should respect the time and schedules of the teachers and staff. Volunteers and parents should avoid unannounced visits to the school – and especially classrooms – that are not pre-planned if they desire to support through volunteerism.
- Attire must be appropriate and modest when acting as a parent volunteer.
- Language, actions, and attitudes which model high standards of moral behavior are always expected while on campus.
- Gossiping or speaking in an inappropriate or complaining fashion about the school, students, families, faculty, or staff members will not be permitted and will be reported to the administration. We encourage our students, staff, and community to always “speak victory” about VCS and about others.
- Volunteers are accountable for performing their assignments in the safest manner possible, avoiding personal injury or injury to students or faculty.
- To give one's undivided attention to the task at hand, we ask that volunteers do not bring preschool-aged children when serving. Exceptions are at the discretion of the activity's organizer.
- Respect and care are to be given to property belonging to VCS, a facility VCS is using, or to the property of another volunteer, parent, or visitor.

K-4 Policies & Procedures

LOWER ELEMENTARY (K-4)

ADMISSIONS & GETTING STARTED (K-4)

Kindergarten Placement

Per Arizona Revised Statute 15-821, a child must be five (5) years old before September 1 to be eligible to enroll in Kindergarten. It is rare for VCS to consider or make an exception to this policy; exceptions must be approved in writing by both the campus Principal and the Head of School, and any approval is considered probationary. In every case, VCS intends to make decisions based on the best interest of the student and impacted classroom. VCS follows these age requirements for all enrolling or transfer students in each grade.

Classroom Supplies

VCS provides all basic initial supplies for students in the classroom. The school/teacher reserves the right to request certain items purchased by families to accommodate specific projects or related activities.

Morning Drop Off Process

The following steps are required for morning drop off (car riders):

- The drop off process for car riders begins at 8:00 am.
- Families must turn onto South River Drive via Guadalupe Road (no alternate route).
- K-4 parents should enter the parking lot from the west side and approach the drop off area.
- Please exercise extreme caution and lower speed approaching the designated drop off area.
- All drivers must stay in their vehicles to create a safe and organized drop off process.
- All drivers should avoid the distraction of cell phone use during this process.
- All late arrivals (after 8:25 am) will park, escort their student(s), and enter through the Trojan Tunnel to sign in their student(s) in the office. At which time the student will receive a "tardy slip" to give to their classroom teacher.

Afternoon Pick Up Process

The following steps are required for the afternoon pick up (car riders):

- The pickup process begins at 3:15 pm (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday) and 1:30 pm on Wednesday via the car rider line. All families/cars are assigned a particular number, which changes each year.
- Ensure your school-issued car tag is displayed, typically hanging from the rearview mirror.
- All drivers should stay in their vehicles to create a safe, organized, and efficient drop off process. A driver may briefly step in and out of their vehicle to assist small children, if necessary.
- All drivers should avoid the distraction of cell phone use during this process.
- Cars will leave the dismissal area via Valley Alley (adjacent to the tire center) or north of the K-4 school office.
- If exiting by the tire center, turn right on Guadalupe Road; no left turns are permitted.

- K–4 students must be picked up via car line by 3:35 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and by 1:55 p.m. on Wednesdays (or 12:55 p.m. with a 12:30 p.m. release). Any student not picked up by the designated time will be moved to the office and a \$25 fee per student, per day will be charged. This fee will be billed to the student's FACTS account on a monthly basis.

Chapel and Assemblies

All elementary students, K-2nd and 3rd – 4th, will alternate weekly chapels on Wednesdays from 9:30 am – 10:00 am in the D-building. Students' behavior during chapel should demonstrate a reverent attitude and heart. Special assemblies may also be held on various occasions. Parents are invited to join either at their convenience. Parents must provide a car rider tag for entrance onto campus for chapel.

Homeroom Pledges & Prayer

Students will begin each homeroom day with selected pledges. Teachers will also take time for an opening prayer each day as part of this designated time. Teachers and staff are encouraged to pray during the day both inside and outside of the classroom as needs arise.

The following are the pledges conducted daily in homerooms at VCS:

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Christian Flag: I pledge allegiance to the Christian Flag and to the Savior, for whose kingdom it stands. One Savior, crucified, risen, and coming again, with life eternal for all who believe.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Bible: I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word, I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. I will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God.

Closed Campus

Valley Christian Schools is not an open campus for students/parents to come and go at their leisure. Students will remain ~~are always to stay~~ on the school property during the school day. They may not leave without being checked out at the office by an authorized individual. Students are not permitted to leave campus for purposes of lunch except in rare cases of being checked out by a parent.

Special Events

The following is a brief explanation of special days and events that occur throughout the school year. The school reserves the right to add, change, cancel, or modify any school event with notice to the families.

School Spirit Days: School Spirit Days take place throughout the calendar year, such as dress-up days and team competitions. Students are encouraged to wear Valley Blue on Fridays.

Meet the Teacher/Open House: This event happens before the first day of school and is a “meet and greet” time with teachers, students, and parents.

Curriculum Night: This event takes place in the evening during the first full week of school where parents are invited to their students’ classrooms to learn about grade-level procedures, guidelines, and curriculum. This is a parent-only event.

Christmas/Spring Programs: Students perform in a program that celebrates the true meaning of Christmas. Each class has a part in the program as students sing, dance, and act. Family, friends, and the community are invited to these evening events. The Christmas Program and Spring Program and related practices are not optional for students. This time represents a major component of our music curriculum and overall growth for our students to include community involvement. The spring concert is a similar event to showcase the talent for our students.

Celebrate Reading: During the 3rd quarter, students participate in various activities to celebrate reading and bring awareness to establishing strong reading habits.

Field Trips

Field trips are an extension and reinforcement of classroom learning. Every grade level will plan one-two trips per year. Field trips must have educational value and be treated as part of the curriculum, with plans, goals, and follow-up. All Field Trips are covered by student tuition.

ACADEMICS (K-4)

Academic Assessments

The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments (<https://www.nwea.org>) are computer-based, adaptive assessment tools that measure growth in learning for reading, language usage, and math. As a student answers questions correctly, the questions increase in difficulty. If a student answers incorrectly, the questions become more manageable for them. Therefore, each student takes a test specifically targeted at his or her learning level. When data is disaggregated by individual student, class, and grade level, teachers are then able to pinpoint a student's instructional level and how to best support them. The MAP tests are administered two to three times a year, and parents will typically receive the results at the end of the fall and spring sessions. These results enable parents and teachers to empirically track and measure student growth and achievement throughout the academic year. Teachers then use student MAP scores to adapt lessons to meet individual learning needs. Teachers are expected to carefully examine MAP test results to differentiate their instruction based on student needs.

Grade Retention

If a student is in danger of failing, parents will be notified in advance so that tutoring or modifications can be put in place, as grade retention is not our desire as a school. Teachers must submit a written notice of any potential retention for collaboration to the respective Principal by the start of the second semester. There may be instances where the administration will collaborate regarding retention. The Principal reserves the right to retain or pass a student after reviewing options, and it is deemed in the best interest of the student. All staff will respectfully support and carry out decisions regarding retention or placement once finalized. The focus should then shift to continue implementing additional support for the student, keeping close communication with parents, assessing various classroom strategies, assisting, and encouraging the student with grace and love, all of which may lead to future collaborative opportunities.

The final decision regarding student retention or placement rests with the Principal. If there is doubt concerning the promotion or retention of a student by the parent, or their required retaking of a course, a conference between the parents/guardians, Principal, and other pertinent personnel shall be held to consider the request for review. The school shall document participation or nonparticipation in this required conference. If the conference attendees fail to agree concerning the student's placement, the final decision will rest with the Principal.

Promotion or retention of students or their required retaking of a course shall be primarily based on the following criteria:

Kindergarten through Second Grade

Unsatisfactory progress in reading and failure to complete the necessary levels of reading may result in the necessity of repeating the grade unless determined to be that of a language deficiency. Promotion/retention decisions may also be based on the developmental maturity of the student as well as their academic performance. When considering the developmental maturity level of the student, some indicators to consider are as follows: attendance; birthday; health/wellness; emotional readiness; and social readiness.

Third through Fourth Grade

Promotion or retention of students shall be primarily based on their ability to succeed in the next grade. Promotion/retention decisions will be based on academic performance. Performance indicators to be considered include but are not limited to the following: grades; attendance; standardized assessments; health/wellness; emotional readiness; and social readiness.

Student Assessment Guidelines

Grades should reflect how well a student has mastered the content material and the specific learning objectives for the course. Teachers should be consistent and fair in determining grades. Assessments will be recorded using two categories: Formative Assessments and Summative Assessments.

The goal of formative assessments is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by teachers to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. More specifically, formative assessments help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work; helping teachers recognize where students are struggling and allowing them to address problems immediately. At least one formative assessment should be used each week in each course.

The goal of summative assessments is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against the standard(s) or benchmark(s). Summative assessments are often high stakes, which means that they have a high point value. Examples of summative assessments include unit exams, midterm exams, final projects, or a research paper. Information from summative assessments can be used formatively when students or teachers use it to guide their efforts and activities in subsequent courses. Each unit should have one summative assessment.

Assessments and Weights (K-4)

The following represents K-4 weights/categories based on specific assessment and/or work completed.

Grade Level	Formative Assessments	Summative Assessments	Homework
Kindergarten	95%	0%	5%
1st - 2nd	75%	20%	5%
3rd - 4th	50%	40%	10%

Formative Assessments		Summative Assessments
During Learning – Check-Ins		After Learning- Mastery of Concepts
Teacher Observations	Exit Passes	Unit Test
Team Projects	Classroom	Standardized Test
Centers	Quizzes	Projects
Journals	Warm-Up	Research Papers

Definitions

Formative: An assessment for learning that occurs during the learning process and provides information to both teachers and students to adjust/increase learning/pacing. This happens primarily in the classroom setting. Examples may include class work, bell ringers, exit tickets, quizzes, labs, draft essays, etc.

Summative: An assessment of learning that occurs after instruction to determine what students know, understand, and can do at one point in time. Examples may include unit exams, major projects (short/long term), essays, and lab practicum.

Homework: Represents all work completed by student outside the classroom (i.e. at home). This would exclude short- or long-term projects given such work would be classified as a summative assessment. This category should be used for items such as reading logs or other compliancy related work. Homework is an item in which teachers cannot truly assess if the student is learning concepts through independent practice. Teachers will rely primarily on formative and summative assessments within the classroom to monitor and/or assess student mastery of content and/or growth.

Kindergarten Grades

The kindergarten program uses standards-based grading, where teachers evaluate each student based on their ability to meet each standard or learning objective. The following is the grading scale used:

- EE = Exceeds Expectations (90-100)
 - Demonstrates a clear understanding and mastery
- DE = Developing as Expected (80-89)
 - Demonstrates increased independence and understanding
- BD = Beginning to Develop (70-79)
 - Beginning to understand and develop the necessary skills
- ND = Not Developing as Expected (60-69)
 - Struggles with the basic concepts and skills
- NT = Not Taught during the grading period

Missing Work

1. A grade of "M" (missing) will be assigned in the gradebook for work not completed (excused or unexcused absences) by the specified due date. The student will receive an "M" on the day an assignment is collected by their teacher. This may be changed upon the completion of the assignment(s) within the established timeframe.
2. Students will lose 10% per day up to five days on all assignments not submitted by the assigned due date unless previous arrangements have been established. After the initial five days, the grade will be changed from an "M" (see above) to a numeric ZERO in the gradebook.
3. Report cards should be an accurate reflection of the student's academic performance/achievement. There will be an academic audit conducted if there is a significant difference between posted grades and other assessments. This includes schoolwide growth tools such as MAP and classroom assessments. Final grades should be consistent with but not limited to the student's performance per formative and summative assessments.
4. Generally, students will have at least one day for each day absent to make up work; however, special circumstances (extended illness) may require a different time schedule. There should not be an expectation for the teacher to circle back and teach content missed for extended absences or vacations.

STUDENT CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE (K-4)

Student Discipline

Teachers, for the most part, handle their own discipline cases in accordance with school policies. Such discipline may range from a reprimand to detention and may include conferences with parents. The administration handles cases referred to them by staff, as well as cases occurring outside the classroom, and may use a wide range of disciplinary means.

VCS believes that respect for authority is an essential ingredient to quality education and character development; therefore, our classrooms are controlled with a firm, loving discipline by qualified and dedicated Christian teachers (Hebrews 12:6-11). This is especially an essential component while students formulate many of their approaches to these areas during their developmental years.

It is our desire that all students strive for self-discipline in their attitudes and actions. To develop such self-discipline, it is necessary for us (both teachers and parents) to teach and train our students in this process. For example, this will include addressing those in authority by Mr. or Mrs. and their last name while at school or school-related functions, or a respectful “yes/no, sir” or “yes/no, ma’am” while responding to a teacher or administrator. Teachers are tasked with the primary responsibility of ensuring that their students behave in a proper and fitting way at school in partnership with our families. At the beginning of the school year, each teacher creates a classroom management plan, clearly communicates the expectations and consequences to the students. These classroom expectations are distributed to all parents at the start of the school year and are posted in the classroom for reference.

Our team believes each student is a special person that deserves to be respected (Genesis 1:27). Students need to feel safe and secure at school. Students need to be taught how to interact correctly with others and how to make good choices about their behavior (Proverbs 22:6). If a student chooses to disregard these rules, there are consequences for their choices. Those consequences may include a verbal warning, note, or phone call to parents, or being sent to the Principal’s office. If inappropriate behavior continues, a conference with parents will be arranged. For more serious violations, there are further disciplinary actions detailed within this handbook. As our students learn to get along with each other and respect those in authority, they will develop into productive citizens who will function well in society.

Specific offenses that may result in disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

- Any deliberate and or repeated classroom disruptions
- Improper use of technology and or electronic devices, including cellphones/computers and Apple watches
- Profane or vulgar language
- Bullying
- Disrespect of person in authority or other students
- Truancy or leaving school without permission
- Altercations, verbal or physical
- Cheating or Plagiarism
- Possessing a weapon or implement that may be considered a weapon

- Theft
- Possession of an illegal or improper substance, including vaping paraphernalia
- Unwanted reference to one's physical appearance, religion, race, color, or ethnic origin
- Implicit or explicit threats against someone
- Unsolicited gestures or comments

Should a student make a choice that is major behavior infraction, or, should a student make choices that result in multiple minor/moderate behavior infractions, K8 administration will review the circumstances with parents/student. At that stage, the path forward may be a student behavior contract and/or a review of enrollment status.

Probation

Probation may be academic or disciplinary or both. Probation is a period during which the student is expected to make significant academic or behavioral progress to show that he/she has changed sufficiently to allow them to stay at Valley Christian. During this time, the student must demonstrate a real change in behavior and personal growth. Probation may include the loss of privileges, such as attending certain extracurricular activities for a period. Students who successfully complete a period of probation may be restored to full student privileges.

Lunch Detention

Detentions are issued by staff for minor infractions and offenses by the students. Using the detention system allows teachers to alert parents of such infractions. Detentions are scheduled during a student's scheduled lunch period and is supervised by Administration. Parents are notified by phone or email if a child has been issued a lunch detention.

Suspension

The Principal may suspend any student for violating the discipline policy set forth above and for neglecting to comply with previously imposed discipline. The purpose of suspending a student is to remove the student from fellowship in the general student population, thereby sending him/her a strong message that the student is in jeopardy of losing the privilege of attending Valley Christian Schools. This time away gives students the opportunity to think about their choices with the hope that they will repent and change their hearts and actions. In general, suspensions are two types:

- *In-School:* Suspended students will be assigned to a classroom or office in the school for the term of the suspension. Such suspension shall be made either when it is judged in the best interest of the student or when a parent is not continuously at home to supervise the student. Suspended students are not to have any contact with other students without the expressed permission of the administration.

- *Out of School:* Such suspension shall be made only when either (or both) parent(s) is home to continuously monitor the suspended student and when it is in the best interest of the school to have the student off-campus.

Students are allowed to complete makeup work/assessments from their suspension period for full credit. All makeup work must be completed/submitted within the agreed upon timeframe (with the teacher). A student who is in in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension may not participate in any extracurricular practices/activities or athletic functions during that suspension.

Withdrawal

In some circumstances, the administration may recommend that a family withdraw their student from the school in the interests of the student and or the school. Re-admittance to Valley Christian Schools after any withdrawal, especially a disciplinary withdrawal, requires an administrative review.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the permanent exclusion of a student from school. The administrators of the school may expel a student if, in their opinion, it is in the best interests of the school to do so. Expulsion may be the result of a chronic violation of school rules and standards or refusal and or inability to successfully complete the academic program of the school. Expulsion may also be the result of a single incident or episode that endangers the safety, reputation, or environment of the school.

If at any time VCS determines, at its sole discretion, that a parent's actions do not support the school's mission/vision or reflect a lack of cooperation and commitment to the home and school working together, the school has the right to require the withdrawal of the student(s). Notification, conferencing, and written documentation will occur throughout this process. The Head of School will be informed of the Elementary Principal's final decision to withdraw from a student(s) based on inappropriate parental behavior.

Any student whose conduct or attitude in or out of school shows him/her to be in opposition to the basic principles and purposes of the school or who maliciously destroys school property will be dismissed or asked to withdraw from school. A student may be expelled from school for a serious breach of conduct and or repeated problems with behavior or academic performance.

Expulsion will be recommended to the Principal to whom will report such information to the Head of School if it becomes apparent that the school will not be able to meet the needs of a student, or that the student's behavior is preventing classroom instruction. Expulsion may also be recommended for unresolved academic or disciplinary probation. When expulsion is recommended, the date of withdrawal from the school will be set, and the withdrawal procedure followed. The expulsion date may be immediate.

DRESS CODE (K-4)

Valley Christian Schools endeavors to promote excellence in all areas of education, including dress. To this end, careful consideration was given to the formation of the dress code. The purpose of our dress code is to promote an atmosphere of modesty and neatness without excessive restriction on self-expression. This dress code is designed to be clear and consider the needs of our school community, our students, and our families.

While we feel strongly that our dress should reflect our Christian values, the code outlined here is not designed to condemn any one way of dressing. Rather, it is an agreed upon set of parameters that we, as a community, will commit to, much like dress expectations in a work environment. Therefore, the cooperation of families is necessary to maintain the dress code and parents are expected to cooperate with the school in monitoring their child's daily attire. If parents have questions about whether a specific piece of clothing is acceptable, they should feel free to contact administration before allowing that clothing to be worn to school.

Students will be expected to follow the dress code at all school events, including rehearsals, practices, workouts, athletic events, field trips, banquets, performances, etc., unless otherwise specified by administration. Details for each area are outlined below. Students not in compliance with the dress code will be subject to disciplinary action, as outlined below. Administration will make the final call on issues of dress code and reserves the right to decide what is proper and fitting regarding attire for school and school events.

At Valley Christian Schools, we agree to the following guidelines for how we dress.

Students *may* wear...

- Clothing that expresses your creative style within the boundaries of the dress code
- Individuals, groups, images, or wording that do not conflict with Biblical principles
- College and university t-shirts
- Valley Christian Schools spirit wear

Students *may not* wear...

- Any item that promotes unbiblical values or interferes with student health or safety, or contributes to a hostile environment, including displays of offensive language, symbols, or gestures, images that depict drugs, alcohol, violence, weapons, illegal activity, profanity, pornography, or that demean any person or group, items that pertain to gothic, occult, political affiliations, or other items deemed inappropriate by the administration.
- Costumes during school days, unless specified for a spirit day or special event

Students *must* wear...

- Clothing that is in conformity with their genetic code

ACADEMIC ATTIRE (Everyday wear)

SHIRTS	- Shirts should be appropriately sized and completely cover abdomen, back, and undergarment, even when arms are fully extended. <u>Girls</u> – Sleeveless and tank tops are allowed; straps must be 2”. <u>Boys</u> – Sleeveless and tank tops are not allowed. - Sheer shirts must have a dress code appropriate shirt underneath. - Tube tops, crops, bathing suit tops, racer-back shirts, or low-cut necklines are not allowed. - Sweaters, jackets, etc. may not be used to cover non-dress code shirts.
PANTS & SHORTS	- Pants and shorts must be appropriately sized and completely cover undergarments, even while sitting. - No rips or holes - Frayed hems are allowed. - No pajama pants - All shorts must be mid-thigh or longer. <u>Girls</u> may wear leggings. - No words or messages written across the bottom or crotch area
DRESSES & SKIRTS	<u>Boys</u> may not wear dresses or skirts. - All dresses and skirts be mid-thigh or longer. - Shorts or leggings must be worn underneath.
FOOTWEAR	- Students must wear shoes always. - Sandals must have a heel strap. - Must wear athletic shoes and socks on PE days - No slippers/house shoes (including UGG slippers) - No flip flops, slides, or Classic Crocs
HEADWEAR	- Hats (including beanies) and sunglasses may be worn during outdoor recesses and outdoor PE only. - Hoods may only be worn outdoors.
HEADPHONES	Students may not wear headphones, ear buds, or air pods at any time during the school day. Noise cancelling headphones will be provided by the school if they are required as part of a student’s approved accommodation plan. 1st VIOLATION: Student will receive a warning from a faculty or staff member to put headphones, ear buds, or air pods away and out of sight. 2nd VIOLATION: Headphones, ear buds, and air pods will be confiscated by the faculty or staff member and stored at the front office for the rest of the school day. Students will need to pick up their headphones, ear buds, or air pods from the front office at the end of the school day. Parents will be notified by administration.

	○ 3rd VIOLATION: If this is a repeated behavior, administration will work with the family to determine appropriate consequences and establish a restriction plan (i.e. headphones left at home, headphones checked in before going to class, etc.) Students will work with administration to develop an action plan prior to lifting the restriction plan.
HAIR	• Neat and clean • Natural colors only • Students may dye their hair natural colors. • Hair must be kept out of eyes. • VCS reserves the right to require a student to get a haircut, change a style, or change a color if, in the judgement of administration, the student's choice has created a distraction.
TATTOOS	• No visible tattoos
ACCESSORIES & MAKEUP	• <u>Boys</u> may not wear earrings. • <u>Girls</u> may wear ear piercings only. • Students may not wear makeup. • Accessories should not be distracting. • No animal accessories (i.e. cat ears, tails, gloves, etc.)
NAIL POLISH	• <u>Boys</u> may not wear nail polish.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

- Faculty or staff will report dress code violations to administration or designated staff member, who will then address the incident and record it in RenWeb. The principal, vice principal, lead teacher, or designated support staff may determine and respond to any dress code violations involving students and notify families for follow up. This includes the right to send students home or request parents to bring an immediate change of attire as deemed necessary.

1ST VIOLATION	• Warning • Documented in RenWeb with a copy to the appropriate Vice Principal • Parents notified • Student may be required to change. • <i>Due to safety concerns, all shoe violations will require a parent to bring a pair of dress code appropriate shoes to the school.</i>
2ND VIOLATION	• Lunch detention • Documented in RenWeb with a copy to the appropriate Vice Principal • Parents notified • Parents are required to bring a change of clothes before the student can continue in school day.

3RD VIOLATION	• Student sent home for the rest of the day
4TH VIOLATION	• Parent/student meeting with administration • Behavior contract issued
5TH VIOLATION	• Consequences outlined in behavior contract carried out – up to suspension/dismissal

FORMAL ATTIRE (Performances, Banquets, Promotion, Father-Daughter Dance)

- Attire must follow the regular school dress code for dresses, skirts, and tops with the following exceptions.
 - Spaghetti straps or strapless tops are allowed if covered with a sweater or shawl.
 - Sandals and heels do not need to have a heel strap.
 - K-4 students may wear light, natural makeup.

SPIRIT WEEK ATTIRE

- Academic attire dress code is enforced during all spirit weeks with the following exceptions.

BOYS	GIRLS
May wear hats	May wear hats
May wear costumes on designated days	May wear costumes on designated days
	May wear leggings with a top that reaches the thigh in the front and back

EXTRACURRICULAR EVENT ATTIRE (Athletic Events, School Trips, Casual Dances)

- Academic attire dress code is enforced for all games and activities HOME & AWAY (unless specified otherwise) with the following exceptions.
- If the student's attire does not meet these standards, the student will not be admitted into the function.
- School administration reserves the right to determine what is considered proper attire for school events and may refuse admittance to functions for any student who is not adhering to the following guidelines.

BOYS	GIRLS
May wear hats	May wear hats
May wear jeans with holes if there is still modesty	May wear jeans with holes if there is still modesty
May wear tank tops	May wear leggings
	May wear shorts with modesty (i.e. no short shorts, meaning no part of the buttocks would be showing)
	May wear biker shorts if they hit mid-thigh (usually 7-9" inseam)

GENERAL POLICIES (K-4)

Parent Supervision

All parents/family members are asked to closely supervise their children while on campus and related school events. Children should not roam freely around the campus without parental supervision. If younger children become a distraction during Chapel or school programs, parents are asked to take the child(ren) out until they can come back in quietly, so as not to interfere with others.

Playground and Recreational Areas

Lower Elementary Students (K-4):

These rules have been developed as guidelines for safety, but they may not cover every situation that occurs on the playground. Playground staff may also use their own judgment in determining the safety of additional practices. The playground or recreational area is defined as the area that includes wood chips, grass, and basketball court. Students may not use the sidewalks for playing or running during recess or breaks.

- One student is allowed on a swing at a time. He/she must be seated when swinging and swing in a straight pattern. Jumping from the swings is not allowed. Students who are waiting for a swing should stand at a safe distance from the swing and count to 100. At that time, the child on the swing should get off and allow the child who is waiting in line to use the swing.
- Only one (1) student should go down the slide at a time. Students should not climb up the slide but must slide down feet first.
- Students should take turns on the climbing dome.
- Climbing is not allowed on top of the fences, poles, basketball standards, buildings, or trees.
- Tag is permitted with light touching only. Shoving, grabbing, tackling, and pulling are not permitted.
- Toys may not be brought to school from home, except for show and tell, or at the discretion of the teacher.
- Balls may not be thrown at anyone unless it is part of an organized and supervised game, and then they should only be thrown below the chest.
- Do not stand or walk on the picnic tables. Sit on the bench part only.
- Do not kick any basketball or four (4) square balls. Soccer balls and footballs may be kicked as part of an organized game. Four-square balls must be used appropriately without slamming or banging.
- Do not hang on the basketball rim.
- Do not pick flowers, climb trees, or break off any part of a plant around the campus or playground area.
- Hats and sunshades may be worn on the playground and outside.

After School Clubs

Specific after-school clubs (note, these differ from **Trojan Time**) are conducted throughout the school year. A variety of athletic, academic, and other clubs may be offered to K-4 enrolled students and requires an additional fee for each club session. These seasonal clubs are conducted by outside organizations. It is the sole responsibility of parents to ensure transportation is provided and arrive promptly to pick up their student(s).

Lunch (Valley Grill & Valley Central)

If available or authorized by the school, students have the option to order a school lunch online. Students should bring water to their designated lunch period. If your child has a food allergy, please notify the nurse in writing specifying the allergies. Please note, we are not a peanut-free campus and do not have a peanut-free lunchroom, however we do provide a peanut-free table in the lunchroom. Lunch will be eaten in the lunchroom (Valley Grill or Valley Central) or assigned area with proper supervision. Proper behavior and manners are expected during lunch. All students are responsible for the cleanliness of the area in which they eat. During lunch, students are not allowed to roam freely around the school grounds and must stay in their assigned area. Students are to stay sitting at their table until dismissed by the teacher on duty.

All food consumption is to be in the lunch area. Students should not take uneaten food with them back to their class or outside. The school cannot accommodate guests eating with their students on campus. Parents may choose to check out their students from school for any special occasions and return afterwards by formally signing out their child in the office.

Lunchroom Guidelines

The following are set expectations to be followed by all students during their designated lunchtime:

- Show respect to all supervisors in the cafeteria.
- Do not enter the cafeteria until you have been invited by cafeteria support staff.
- Always walk while inside Valley Grill or Valley Central– no running or horseplay.
- Place trash and related items in the correct containers.
- Use soft, inside voices always – no shouting or yelling.
- Keep food on a plate or in your mouth/chew with your mouth closed.
- No throwing, sharing, or playing around with food or drinks.
- Sit up properly and in the designated area. 3 students per bench.
- Keep hands and feet to self.
- Clean up personal eating area or areas assigned by the support staff.
- After exiting, place lunchboxes neatly in the designated area.
- If you need to use the restroom, ask for permission, use the one located in Valley Grill or Valley Central.
- Students may have limited access to microwave ovens to heat lunches.

- Students are not permitted to be behind the serving counter at any time.
- Students are to remain in Valley Grill or Valley Central until dismissed by support staff.
- If a student forgets their lunch, they will be allowed to phone a parent to bring them lunch.

Candy, Gum, Snacks

Gum chewing can become messy and is distracting; therefore, gum is not permitted for students during the school day. Exceptions may be granted by teachers for testing sessions but must be properly discarded immediately after the testing session. A snack brought from home may be consumed at breaks or at lunchtime. VCS recommends that students limit the consumption of candy, snacks, and soda to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Please do not pack candy or excessive sugary items for student snack or lunchtime.

Water Bottles

Every student is required to have a water bottle at school. This is essential to prevent dehydration. Students should regularly take their water bottle home to be washed but must remember to bring it back to school the next day. Students who repeatedly forget their water bottle are required to contact their parents to bring them a water bottle to school. **All student water bottles should be clearly marked with first and last name.** If a bottle is not marked, the teacher is permitted to write the student's name on their water bottle.

Personal Belongings

All personal belongings or related items brought to campus are the responsibility of the student. There should be no related items brought unless advised by the teacher and approved by the Principal. Illegal items/substances and weapons will be confiscated and not returned, resulting in an immediate suspension or expulsion. The parent/guardian of the student will be advised, along with the appropriate local authorities, if necessary. This action may prevent a student(s) from returning to school pending any related investigation by authorities or members of the administration. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items.

Students are not to bring toys, video games, cars, or other related items from home. Sports equipment can be brought to school and used at recess/break (only) as approved by the PE teacher or Principal. The school is not responsible for any lost or damaged items brought from home. If there are any questions related to the definition of items that may be brought to school, it should be communicated to the administration (before bringing it to school) for clarification. Any such items seen or heard because of being brought to school by students will be confiscated and turned into the Principal and will only be returned to the parent. The 2nd time the item is confiscated, it will be held by the Principal for four weeks and then returned to the parent. The 3rd time the item is confiscated, it will be donated to a local

charity. Continued violation of this policy will result in the item being confiscated and kept until a parent/guardian retrieves the item from the Principal.

Students should not bring personal books, magazines, or related items to school. This will reduce distractions in the classroom and avoid different views and preferences related to content or themes. Teachers may ask students to bring certain books or related materials to school for purposes of classroom activities or projects.

Cell Phone Policy

Student cell phones or any other related communication devices (i.e., Apple Watch) are NOT permitted at any time. Cell phones may remain in the students' backpacks for use once off-campus. Students who violate this policy will be given a verbal warning for the first occurrence and an email will be sent to the parent. The next occurrence will result in confiscation from the student and require the parent to retrieve the phone. Thereafter, the student will face suspension and a parent/student meeting with the Principal. Students may use the office telephone as needed. However, students must have a hall pass from their teacher to go to the office to use the phone.

Substance Abuse

Students who possess, use, or appear under the influence of a mood or mind-altering chemicals are in contradiction to God's Word and interfere with the school's responsibility of providing a safe and healthy environment for all students. The use of such substances impairs the ability to learn, thus limiting the ability of the school to educate the student and accomplish our mission. Valley Christian Schools students are forbidden to use or possess alcoholic beverages, tobacco, vaping paraphernalia or simulated products, and mood or mind-altering chemicals during their time at Valley Christian Schools either on or off-campus (including all vacations or breaks).

The following corrective actions may be taken, which may include immediate up-to-five-day suspension or expulsion. In addition, the school may require counseling or drug testing at the parents' expense. A student who distributes or sells mind-altering chemicals will be reported to the police and is subject to immediate expulsion from VCS. A student who possesses illegal substances on campus or school events will normally be asked to withdraw or be expelled from VCS.

Social Media and Personal Communications

VCS believes students should portray Christ-like character on and off this campus. This also includes the area of social media. It is impossible to make an all-inclusive list of inappropriate or offensive behaviors; however, the following is a list that includes some things that would be considered inappropriate or offensive. If a student chooses to participate in them, appropriate disciplinary action will take place, including possible expulsion. Personal electronic devices should not contain any content of a sexual or graphic nature. Photos,

videos, online content, text/picture messages, links to websites, tweets/re-tweets, comments, images, or posts that deal with any of the following areas:

- The personal use or possession of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products, or items that condone drug-related activity. This includes any drug paraphernalia.
- Content that is of a sexual nature.
- Actions that might be considered cyber-bullying, including content that is unsportsmanlike, derogatory, demeaning, or threatening toward any individual or entity. Examples of these include comments regarding our school, another school, coaches, or students as well as against any race or gender.
- Content that depicts or encourages unacceptable, violent, or illegal activities. Examples of these include hazing, sexting, sexual harassment/assault, full or partial nudity, inappropriate gestures, stalking, gambling, discrimination, fighting, vandalism, academic dishonesty, underage drinking, and illegal drug/alcohol use.

Theft

Theft of personal property or of school property is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Theft will almost always be punished by suspension from school and police notification. Continued violations may result in administrative withdrawal or expulsion.

Bullying and Harassment

VCS believes every student should have the privilege to learn in an environment that is free from hurt caused by bullying, intimidation, or harassment. We aim to create a school culture and environment where bullying will not be tolerated. Our framework for this policy is to establish relationships which are grounded in God's love, compassion, reconciliation, and restitution. We are called by Jesus Christ to provide our students with a wholesome academic environment. Therefore, we do not condone behaviors which harm other students, whether physically or emotionally. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to report it and know that the incident will be dealt with promptly and effectively. **Any student who believes he or she has been the subject of bullying is to report the incident immediately to a teacher, staff member, school administrator, or parent/guardian, as applicable.** Reporting incidents in a timely fashion is critical to allow proper follow up before an extended amount of time has lapsed.

Children do have disagreements with each other, and friendships change from time to time. This may be considered conflict and not bullying, and may be dealt with differently as warranted.

CONFLICT	RUDE	MEAN	BULLYING
Occasional	Occasional	Once or Twice	Is REPEATED
Not planned; in the heat of the moment	Spontaneous: unintentional	Intentional	Is planned and done on purpose
All parties are upset	Can cause hurt feelings; upset	Can hurt others deeply	The target of the bullying is upset
All parties want to work things out	Based in thoughtlessness, poor manners or narcissism	Based in anger; impulsive cruelty	The bully is trying to gain control over the target
All parties will accept responsibility	Rude person accepts responsibility	Behavior often regretted;	The bully blames the target
An effort is made by all parties to solve the problem			The target wants to stop the bully's behavior; the bully does not
Can be resolved through mediation	Social skill building could be of benefit	Needs to be addressed/ should NOT be ignored	CANNOT be resolved through mediation

Source: Jennifer Astles, DASA Newsletter, January 2014, TST BOCES

While behavior at times and other places other than school or school events is an individual and parent responsibility, behavior that impairs the testimony of the school cannot be ignored. Therefore, students who engage in behavior outside of school that brings discredit to themselves and the school will be held accountable by the school and likely suspended or dismissed. Although the school's intent is not to actively monitor conduct off-campus, VCS students are expected to act in a manner that brings credit to themselves, their families, the school, and our Lord.

If a student or family believes that bullying, harassment, or discrimination has occurred, they are encouraged to file a report directly with their teacher and/or campus Principal. An online form may also be used in order to report a concern anonymously (valleychristianaz.org/Reporting). These reports are taken extremely seriously; therefore, it is critical that all information provided is accurate and true to the best of one's knowledge. Note that a situation will be handled differently, but appropriately, if it is reported anonymously. Falsifying information on any report of such nature is grounds for disciplinary action to include immediate expulsion or termination.

Obscene behavior, which includes cursing, lewd, offensive, or vulgar language or gestures, whether physical, written, or spoken, are not permitted.

TROJAN TIME (K-4)

General Information & Philosophy

VCS Trojan Time is designed for K-4 students and generally meets during the following hours:

<u>DAYS</u>	<u>BEFORE SCHOOL</u>	<u>AFTER SCHOOL</u>
Mon., Tue., Thur., Fri.	7:00 – 8:00am	3:30 – 5:30pm
Wednesday	7:00 – 8:00am	1:45 – 5:30pm

There is a fifteen-minute grace period for pickup. If a parent or designated pick-up person arrives at 5:46 pm, they will be charged \$25 per student/per day. Charges will be billed to the family's FACTS account monthly.

The Trojan Time program reflects the standards of excellence to include a shared vision of the purpose of education, discipline, and respect of students. Trojan Time provides social time before and after school, which is safe and worry-free. Trojan Time program provides a set schedule and general activities to engage students. A specific time is planned for play, homework, crafts, snacks, and activity centers. There are no field trips off-campus, and transportation is not provided.

Authorized Caregivers

All staff members are screened, fingerprinted, and Christian believers. A staff member with current training in first aid and CPR is always present.

Enrollment Guidelines

VCS K-4 students must be enrolled in the Trojan Time program to participate.

Sign-In & Sign-Out Procedures

Students must be signed in when arriving for Trojan Time before school. After school, enrolled K-4 students are transferred from their classroom to the Trojan Time Program by an assigned staff member at 3:20 pm.

Students can be signed out of Trojan Time by any person with the student's car rider number tag or a photo of the car tag on their phone. The car rider tag must be presented every time a student is picked up. NO EXCEPTIONS. In addition, the sign-out book must be signed by the person who is picking up the student.

Child Safety Checkout Protocol

The following protocol is required for the protection of all students being checked out of the Trojan Time program:

- A Trojan Time worker may ask for picture identification in the event a car rider number is not provided. Parent cooperation is required to be a part of Trojan Time.
- A child must leave the school campus with the parent/guardian once he/she has been signed out.
- A child may not sign him/herself out to go home or to an extracurricular activity.

- If a child attends an extracurricular class and is not picked up immediately at the end of the class, the child will remain with the Club instructor. If your child is not enrolled in Trojan Time and attends an after school club (Robotics, etc.), they may not have access to the Trojan Time program.

Behavior Expectations

Standard VCS behavioral expectations apply during Trojan Time. The discipline consequences used are verbal warnings, behavior plans, removal from activity, notes home, phone calls to parents/guardians, conferences, detention, suspension, probation, up to expulsion. A student may be expelled from Trojan Time at any point for consistent and/or acts of inappropriate behavior (verbal or physical).

Disbursement of Medication

Prescription and non-prescription medications can be administered to Trojan Time students only during PM Trojan Time hours of 3:30 – 5:30 pm. Medication will not be dispensed during AM Trojan Time hours. Instead, students will be sent to the Health Office when the school day starts to receive medication from our School Nurse if medication is needed. To administer medication, the VCS Trojan Time Coordinator must receive written permission signed by the student's parent or health care provider. Please follow the guidelines below.

Information Needed to Administer Medication:

- Prescription medication (must be in a container dispensed by a pharmacy)
- Name of the child
- Type of medication
- Prescription number
- Instructions: Dosage and route of administration, times, and frequency of administration, starting and ending dates of dosage
- Reason for medication
- Date of authorization
- Non-Prescription medication (must be in a container prepackaged and labeled by manufacturer)

Medication must be labeled with the student's name.