



ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK (Kindergarten - 5th)

Granger Christian School admits students of any sex, race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to our students. The school does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions procedures, scholarship programs, athletic, and other school-administered programs. The school does, however, reserve the right to deny admission to any individual who cannot benefit from the experience based on past academic achievement or whose personal lifestyle is not in harmony with the stated philosophy and purpose of GCS.

--- FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS ---

Our Mission

Granger Christian prepares students to impact the world through a Christ-centered education.

Our Vision

Granger Christian School seeks to be:

Christ-Centered
Academically-Minded
Relationally-Focused
Excellence-Driven

--- SCHOOL HOURS ---

8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

--- BUILDING HOURS ---

Teachers are on duty in the cafeteria starting at 7:30 a.m. Students arriving before 7:50 a.m. must go directly to the cafeteria. Students are admitted to the classroom 10 minutes before school begins. **No student should arrive at school before 7:30 a.m.** All students should be in their classroom, ready to learn, by 8 a.m.

Elementary students are dismissed at 3 p.m. and will remain outside until 3:15 p.m. Younger siblings are not permitted to wait for older siblings who have games or practices after school. After 3:15 p.m. all remaining students must go to our aftercare program. Parents will be billed the applicable charges for this service.

--- ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE ---

ABSENCES

Attendance is vital to a successful educational experience. Parents always have the right to keep their children out of school, however, the school has the right not to excuse the reason for absence if it does not fit into the generally accepted categories.

Arrival is expected between 7:30-7:50 AM. If students arrive between 11:00 AM-12:25 PM, they are counted absent one half day. If students arrive after 12:25 PM, they are counted absent a full day. If students leave for the day before 11:00 AM, they are counted absent for a full day. If students leave for the day between 11:00 AM-12:45 PM, they are counted absent for a half day.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Personal illness of a student or a doctor's visit with documentation.
Death or emergency within the family.

Court appearance with documentation.

Pre-approved absence: For absences of one or two days, please notify the teachers and the Attendance Secretary two weeks prior to the start of vacation. Those who wish to use their allowed days for family vacations must request an Extended Absence Form from the office if the vacation will be three or more days. Please see "Extended Absences Policy" below. Vacation days are counted towards the 10-day limit on absences per semester.

Adverse weather conditions: Students living in school districts that delay or close are **not** automatically excused if GCS does not delay or close.

EXTENDED ABSENCE POLICY

An Extended Absence form must be completed whenever a student will be gone for three or more school days. The forms are available in the office. The Extended Absence form must be filled out, signed by the parent, and approved by the Head of School prior to the extended absence so that teachers can be notified, and assignments made. Students are allowed up to six consecutive days and no more than ten days per school year for a family vacation. Family vacation days are counted towards the ten-day limit on absences per semester.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

An unexcused absence is an absence that the school does not consider legitimate or when the school's attendance policy has not been followed. All missed schoolwork will receive zeros. The following are examples of unexcused absences:

- Family vacations that did not receive prior approval or exceed the maximum days allowed for vacation.
- An absence for which the school did not receive parental contact by 9 AM.
- Sleeping-in
- Discipline which removes a student from the classroom, such as in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

There is a limit of ten absences (excused or unexcused) per semester or per class. Any student who misses ten or more days of school per semester may not receive credit for the semester's course work and/or risks not being promoted to the next grade.

- 5 days missed = letter to parents
- 8 days missed = 2nd letter to parents
- 9 days missed = conference with Head of School and parents
- 10 days or more missed = meeting with Head of School, discipline to be determined

In cases of extended illness or injury, an appeal may be made to the school Head of School.

REPORTING ABSENCES

Please report absences by contacting the school office by 9:00 AM at 574-272-5815 or emailing attendance@grangerchristian.org. Please be prepared to give reasons for the absence. Legitimate reasons for absences include sickness, death in the family, doctor or dental appointments, and other such emergencies.

If a student cannot participate in physical education, a note from the parents must be presented to the teacher. For extended periods of non-participation, a note from the attending physician must be

provided. Physical activity is an important part of the overall educational process. We strongly encourage activity, not passiveness, during recess and PE.

TRUANCY

Every third unexcused absence will be a truancy. Unexcused absences are calculated by semester and truanies are calculated annually, not by semester.

A student who skips school or leaves the school campus without permission for any length of time is automatically considered truant for each day skipped.

Truancy will be disciplined in the following manner:

- 1st truancy = parent conference to discuss the child’s absences, next-level consequences, and one in-school suspension day assigned.
- 2nd truancy = parent conference to discuss the child’s absences, next-level consequences, and two in-school suspension days assigned.
- 3rd truancy = parent conference for determination of three days in-school suspension or exclusion from GCS for the remainder of the semester. If the child has in-school suspension, parents will be notified of next-level consequences.
- 4th truancy = exclusion from GCS for the remainder of the school year.

--- ACADEMICS ---

Quality Descriptors for Elementary Academics	
4.0	Exceeds year-end grade level expectations, advanced
3.5	in addition to 3.0 partial success at 4.0
3.0	Meets year-end grade level expectations, mastered
2.5	In addition to 2.0 partial success at 3.0
2.0	Approaching year-end expectations, developing
1.5	Partial success at 2.0
1.0	Below year-end grade level expectations, area of concern

COMPUTERS

Students are not allowed to use any computers or computer devices (GCS owned or personally owned) until they have read the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and have turned in an AUP User Agreement Form for the current school year. The Agreement Form must be signed by both the student and his/her parent or guardian.

COURSE FAILURE

If a student fails to meet grade level expectations for the year, the administration will decide what course of action is to be taken before the student is promoted or retained.

HOMEWORK

Each student will have varying amounts of work to complete outside of school hours. This may be unfinished class work, extra projects, or memory work. Parents should regularly monitor returned papers and projects.

While parents should assist their children by explaining homework, when necessary, the work must be completed by the student, and he/she must take the responsibility for their work. Parents can help their child with his/her homework by helping establish good study habits.

STUDENT RECORDS

Parents and students have the right to inspect and copy the student's academic and health records. Requests must be made through the administration.

FIELD TRIPS

As a vital part of the academic process, all elementary classes take educational field trips. The following may also apply to trips: fees/additional expenses, appropriate dress code, lunches, or special supplies. Students are expected to attend and participate in field trips. Teachers will send additional information as needed.

FIELD TRIP APPROVED DRIVERS

If private vehicles are used on a field trip, a Volunteer Driver Application form with a valid driver's license and proof of insurance must be on file in the office for each driver. Drivers must follow all traffic rules. The form asks for the following information:

1. Explanation Of Recent Traffic Violations.
2. Make, model, year, license plate number, and number of working seatbelts for each vehicle that could be used to transport students. As of July 2005, children under eight years of age must be in a car seat and not transported in the front seat of vehicles with airbags.
3. Name of the insurance company, policy number, and amount of liability coverage provided in the following categories (minimum coverage is listed): Per person for bodily injury must be at least \$250,000. Per incident for bodily injury must be at least \$500,000. Signature and date of person requesting approval to drive.
4. Company vehicles may not be used for field trips.

BACKGROUND CHECK

Any adult who would like to serve in one of the following capacities must complete and have an approved background check on file in the office: attend field trips, in-class tutoring/volunteering, activity management, etc. These will be updated every five years.

--- AWARDS ---

CHARACTER QUALITY CERTIFICATES

Character Quality awards are presented to elementary students at the end of the year at an awards ceremony.

KNIGHTS AWARD

The KNIGHTS Awards are given to exceptional students in Elementary who display the highest moral character expected of GCS students. GCS students are **K**ind, **N**oble, show **I**ntegrity, are **H**onorable, are **T**rustworthy, and are **S**cholars.

--- DISCIPLINE ---

Education at Granger Christian School involves more than just quality academics. Character building and biblical worldview shaping is an integral part of our program. As Christians, we operate from the premise that living our lives based on Biblical standards enables us to glorify and please God. Within the

school setting there are certain character traits, which not only please God, but make for positive relationships within the school community.

Students are expected to refrain from the following or serious disciplinary action. This list is not meant to be all-inclusive.

- Vulgar language or swearing
- Fighting
- Bullying
- Violating the hands-off policy
- Verbal abuse/criticism of other students
- Indecent exposure
- Leaving school or class without permission from authorized school personnel
- Cheating
- Vandalism
- Stealing
- Defiance/disrespect to teachers or staff
- Lying
- Threats of violence or violent acts

Students whose conduct and behavior outside of school reflects poorly on accepted Christian behavior may be subject to school probation or loss of enrollment. This includes the improper use of the internet, other social media, and electronic communication.

Though each classroom teacher establishes rules for his/her classroom that promote Christian character and quality education, there is still a standard for GCS. These rules are encouraged by instruction, motivation, and classroom discipline. If a child shows no signs of eliminating the undesired behavior, the parents will be contacted via a note, phone call, or conference. Parent cooperation and support are essential to help students grow through good behavior and to accomplish classroom success. If a problem continues after parental involvement in the disciplinary process, repeat offenses will be directed to the administration.

At the administrative level, there are normally two steps in the disciplinary process (serious offenses skip the first step):

Step 1 – Instruction: Proverbs tells us to instruct the simple, and they will become wise or foolish. We are further told in Proverbs to discipline the foolish. In the first step, we will talk with and counsel the student. Occasionally, multiple meetings may be held with a student as part of Step 1.

Step 2 – Discipline: The student receives the redemptive discipline step the administration feels is most appropriate and/or the discipline most likely to change behavior.

Elementary administrative discipline may include the following:

- Loss of partial recess to walk the playground perimeter.
- In-School Suspension – Students are placed in isolation to work on schoolwork all day. The needs of the students are handled by the teacher and office personnel.

- Parent Shadowing – Parents may be assigned a one to three-day shadowing of their child for the entire school day.
- Out-of-School Suspension – A student may be suspended and not allowed to be on campus for a set period of time. Discipline of this nature must be viewed as more serious than any of those previously described.
- Probation – The purpose of probation is to provide an opportunity for a student to correct special problems with the assistance of teachers and parents. This is accomplished in an organized way so that everyone understands the seriousness of the situation. This is a last attempt to try to correct a problem so the student can remain at GCS. Probation normally takes one of two forms: probation for academics or probation for attitude/ behavior. Problem areas will be clearly communicated to both the student and parents. Regular communication will take place during the probationary period. Probation will normally last for a minimum of nine weeks and no longer than one semester. Shortly before the probationary period ends, the situation will be evaluated. The student will be returned to normal status, asked to withdraw from school, or, in special circumstances, be given a second probationary period.
- Expulsion/Withdrawal –When appropriate, students may be asked to withdraw from GCS or be expelled. Students who fall into this category have typically been involved in repeated offenses that hinder the education of other students in the classroom and/or the ability of the teacher to teach. They could also be involved in things that affect the health and safety of GCS students and teachers.

- - - DRESS CODE - - -

I. General Philosophy

Our goal at GCS is to dress to honor Christ with a modest and neat appearance. (Hebrews 13:17, 1 Samuel 16:7, 1 Peter 3:3-4) If a child comes to school dressed improperly, you will be asked to bring him/her a proper change of clothing. The dress code is in effect for all school days, as well as all school-sponsored events.

Hair/Jewelry

Boys: Hair cannot be in the eyes. Earrings or other body piercings are not allowed.

Girls: Pierced ears are acceptable. Body piercing, excessive jewelry, and excessive make-up is not allowed.

All: Hair color must be predominantly natural color. Sparse highlights are permissible. Tattoos are not permitted. If a student is admitted with tattoos, they must be completely covered at all times.

Shirts/Tops

All graphics or language on any clothes must be Christ-Honoring All shirts and dresses must have sleeves.

Shirts and tops may not be more than one size larger than a student normally wears.

Shirts must not reveal the body during normal activity.

Shirts may not have a plunging neckline.

All undergarment straps must be covered.

Pants/Shorts

Casual wear, including jeans, is acceptable daily attire. Belts are optional.

Pants and shorts must not reveal undergarments during normal activity.
Shorts, dresses, and skirts are to be no more than 3" above the knee.
These must be without holes.
Leggings or form-fitting pants (yoga pants, etc.) are permissible, but require a shirt or dress that covers the student down to the mid-thigh or longer (erring toward the knee).

Shoes

Shoes and sandals must have a back strap or an enclosed heel.

SPECIAL DAYS: Events such as Field Day and The 12 Days of Christmas may have specific dress requirements which will be communicated by staff at the appropriate time. Other special event days will be announced in which changes to the dress code will be acceptable.

--- GENERAL SCHOOL REGULATIONS ---

In order to maintain an effective learning environment, procedures of conduct and operation are necessary. The following are general school rules/guidelines that provide for the orderly and safe operation of the school and are applicable to ALL students.

CELL PHONES

Elementary students may not bring cellphones to school. Violations of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension. Phones will be confiscated and returned to a parent.

GUM

NO gum is allowed in the building or on school property at any time.

MEDICATION

If a student is required to take prescription medication while at school, a permission form (available in the office) must be on file. Students must bring medications in the original container and keep them in the office. All medications must be taken in the office. Information should include the name of the medication, dosage, time and condition for which the medication is needed. Bulk medications, including aspirin, may not be stored in school lockers. At no time may a student give or sell medication to another student. The office does not stock any type of medication.

TELEPHONE CALLS

Student calls may be made from the office or classroom with permission from the staff. Due to the high volume of calls we receive in the office, we are unable to make our phones available for general use. Parent messages related to emergencies and transportation issues will be forwarded to students.

Should parents need to communicate with a teacher, please send an email. The teacher will either reply or call the parent(s). Parents may also call the school office and leave a message for the teacher. If requested, the teacher will return the call at their earliest convenience. Please respect the time of day and the frequency of the calls.

--- GENERAL INFORMATION ---

MATTHEW 18 PRINCIPLE

We believe the principles in Matthew 18 should be used when any problem or misunderstanding occurs. Most problems can be resolved by going directly to those involved. The administration should be brought into the issue only after parents, students, and teachers have discussed the situation and failed to reach reconciliation.

ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS

Our elementary music programs are designed to teach the element of performance, commitment, and responsibility, as well as to entertain the audience. We ask that your family stay for the duration of the programs. Please remember that attendance at these programs is a part of a student's music grade.

LOST AND FOUND

Items left at school will be placed in Lost and Found. Periodically, unclaimed items will be disposed of as necessary.

LUNCHROOM

Students must bring their lunch from home. Microwaves are available for those students who desire to use them for grades 3-5. Older students may not warm up food for younger students.

SNACKS AND TREATS

Elementary birthday treats are optional, but if provided, please follow these guidelines:

- Give classroom teachers 24 hours notice.
- Provide easily dispensed food items for each child and teacher in the class.
- Please ask the classroom teacher about food allergies within the room.
- The classroom teacher will dispense the treat at his/her discretion.
- Please provide napkins, if needed.
- Please do not send in decorations.