



The Shepherd's Academy

Parent & Student Manual

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Dear Parents, Guardians and Students:

We will be entering our ninth academic year come September 2016. As we continue to do our best to mold our children we invite all concerned to join us in this endeavor. We look forward to an exciting time with our children.

For this year we are once again calling on our parents/guardians to join hands with us in the education process of our children. We, the teachers and administration cannot do it on our own. We also ask Parents/guardians to also get involved and don't fail to be in communication with teachers on their children's performance as we continue to press on with our mission to provide a holistic education. We will not deviate from our program of academic excellence inclusive of biblical truth to mold and develop our future leaders.

We advise that The Parent/Student Handbook is the basis for basic information on policies, practices and procedures. We once more ask every parent to familiarize themselves and share the contents of the Handbook with their children. Also remember the Handbook is not exhaustive and is certainly not intended to replace direct contact between parents, teachers and management. If you have any suggestions for improving the system in educating our children, we should appreciate if you would share these with us. Please pay particular attention to the sections that refer to "dress code"; text books and payment of fees.

We thank you for your interest and for choosing "The Shepherds Academy" for the education of your child.

A hearty welcome!

Management

MOTTO:

“Celebrating Success” “Every Child Matters”

MISSION:

To be an inclusive school providing a high quality, creative and challenging education within a secure, caring and happy environment, where every child experiences a sense of enjoyment and achieves full potential.

VISION:

To create a Christ-centered, secure, stimulating and healthy learning environment, this respects and nurtures the uniqueness of all in order to bring out the best in everyone.

GOALS:

To create a happy and caring school with equal opportunities for all.

To develop lively enquiring minds, enjoying the widest variety of life-long learning experiences.

To develop a healthy lifestyle where children are encouraged to make informed choices.

To achieve excellence, where pupils have high expectations of themselves and of others.

To continue the development of highly skilled staff.

To provide a broad and balanced curriculum, using National Guidelines, where every child’s needs are catered for.

To welcome and develop home/school relationships, providing high quality information and good communication to overcome barriers to learning.

To promote positive relationships, appropriate behaviour and good manners at all times.

To develop personal, spiritual and moral values with respect for all individuals, races, religions and cultures.

To enable children to understand the world in which they live and the inter-dependence of individuals, groups and nations.

The Shepherd's Academy believes:

- **All students can learn.**
- **School will prepare all students for life after school.**
- **We will motivate and develop lifelong learners.**
- **Community and parental involvement is necessary for success.**
- **Respect and character development are fundamental.**

Notice of Non-discrimination

It is The Shepherd's Academy policy to accord equal consideration and impartial treatment regardless of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, socio-economic status, sex, age or handicapping conditions. This policy will prevail in all matters concerning the staff, the students, the public, the educational programs and services of the country and of any individuals with whom the Academy does business.

ACCREDITATION

The Shepherd's Academy is accredited as being in compliance of the standards set for primary school and pre-school by the Ministry of Education of Belize.

The Shepherd's Campus: The Shepherd's Academy is situated on Rivera Road, encompassing 2.07 acres in the master plan of the City of Belmopan.

The premises are shared with "The Shepherd's House".

Our main structure houses nine classrooms with individual bathrooms for males and females. Two wooden structures provide an additional classrooms and the pre-school unit. Work on the third floor is in-progress, hopefully in the near future the third floor will be completed and provide us with ample space for classrooms, Information Technology Lab and a better Library.

Designated female/male rest rooms are available.

Attempts will once again be made to revive The Parents Teachers Association.

Contact Information:

- Telephone: 842-2113; 636-4279; 615-4279, 615-6030 or 623-6030

REGISTRATION

Parents interested in enrolling their child (ren) must first complete an application for admission and provide all relevant documents:

- Birth Certificate
- Passport
- Two photographs
- Health Record / Immunization Certificate
- Transcript

Child placement will be based on actual age for Infant 1. These children must turn five (5) years of age between September 1st and February 28th. All other students will be placed dependent on their transfer information from the previous school they attended.

Students desiring to transfer from another school must take a Placement Test administered to determine the student's eligibility. The test would be in the areas of: Math, English, Penmanship and Reading Comprehension.

If a student is facing disciplinary action by the school they are transferring from, such as suspension or expulsion, that student's acceptance will be considered based on the causes of such actions and the future behavioral commitment from the student and the parents. Such students will be placed under Academic and Disciplinary probation for two months.

Accepted applicants will be notified by phone or mail within five days of receipt of the completed form.

Fees:

A registration/book fee of \$400.00 for those agreeing to utilize used text books and \$650.00 for those opting for new books to be provided, is due at the time of enrollment, this is **non-refundable** and **non-transferable**. This fee covers administrative processing for the school year as well as workbooks and textbooks for the student's respective curriculum. **Workbooks become the property of the students, however, textbooks and readers remain the property of The Shepherd's Academy.**

The student/parent/guardian will need to cover the cost of replacement for textbooks that are lost and not turned in at the end of the school year or have been destroyed.

The student is responsible for the care of all books in their possession. The school appreciates the cooperation of the parents to ensure that textbooks and readers are kept free from markings or drawings.

Once an opening has been reserved, one of the parents or guardian must sign the Tuition Payment Agreement, TPA, for enrollment to be considered complete.

Monthly payment of \$275.00 being tuition fee and \$10.00 Physical Education fee is on the good faith system. Monthly tuition is due on the first of each month. Payments received after the 5th of the month will be charged a late fee of \$25.00.

There is a graduation fee for Standard Six student of \$100.00 which must be paid by May of graduation year.

If payments are unpaid for the period of one month the student will be unable to attend class until outstanding fees are updated.

Students who have delinquent fees will not be allowed to register for the next school year until all delinquent fees are paid in full. No space will be held for any student until all fees and enrollment fees are paid.

If tuition and bills are paid by cheques and any is returned by the bank, a fee of \$100 will be charged to the student's account and are to be settled immediately upon receipt of advice.

Discounts on fees are available on the following circumstances:

- A \$10:00 per month is available for any additional child; if a family has more than one child enrolled in the institution.
- If the annual payment for any or all children is paid in full within the first week of September will qualify for a 10% discount on the tuition amount excluding the PE fee.

Cancellation policy: The withdrawal of a student from the school requires a written notification to be presented to the office. If fees are paid up for the year, a prorated tuition, less a cancellation fee equal to one half month's tuition, will be granted if withdrawal is as a consequence of extended illness or having to relocate outside of the immediate area.

Transferring:

For a student who plans to transfer, the parent must notify the administration office as soon as is possible. Complete Procedures are:

- Obtaining a transfer form signed by the Principal (fee of \$10.00 is applicable).
- Make sure all charges the student may have incurred have been paid.
- Make sure all books and materials checked out to the student have been returned.

Any student who transfers during the school year and later returns to re-enroll in classes will be responsible for any consequences pending related to the Student Code of Conduct.

Transcript & Official Letters:

Students can apply for a transcript at the secretary's office at a cost of \$10.00Bz and deliverable in one day. If the transcript is required the same day the cost is \$15.00Bz.

Official letters to indicate that student is enrolled at the Academy, e.g. for visa and travelling purposes can also be requested at the secretary's office at a cost of \$10.00.

Code of Conduct:

- I will treat everyone with respect.
- I will treat personal and school property with respect.
- I will create and maintain a positive and safe school environment.
- I will come to school on time and prepared for learning.
- I will act responsibly and accept the consequences for my actions.

Student Responsibilities:

- To do all they can to help themselves to learn.
- To respect the rights of other students.
- To respect the teacher's right to teach.
- To respect and protect school property.
- To follow school and classroom rules.
- To behave in a proper and safe manner.

Student Expectations:

Students shall walk throughout the grounds in an orderly and quiet fashion. Talking should be kept to a minimum to avoid disrupting other classes that are in progress.

Observe all guidelines in order to create a safe environment and mutual respect among all staff and students.

Students are expected to help maintain the cleanliness of the grounds by picking up any garbage that may have been dropped and placing these in trash bins provided.

Students are expected to utilize the restroom during designated times whenever possible. Students are expected to respect each other's privacy in the restroom and maintain its cleanliness by flushing the toilet and throwing their paper towels in the trash bins when finished. Soap must be used for washing hands only.

Students are expected to be on their best behavior during assembly, special events, concerts and school outings. Whether guests are present or not, each student is personally responsible for the impression made by the school as a whole. Inappropriate behavior will result in exclusion from future programs or assemblies and to possible disciplinary action.

All students will be required to proceed to assembly area quietly and orderly, take their seats and sit quietly.

General guidelines for behavior in these instances are:

- Give your utmost cooperation and attention.
- Treat performers as guests.
- Be attentive at all times.
- Applaud only when applause is in order.
- Leave quietly when told to do so.

Consequences: As per details under Discipline guidelines.

Parent Responsibilities:

- To do all they can to help their child learn.
- To make sure their child is at school **ON TIME** and stays in class until the scheduled afternoon dismissal.
- To schedule appointments with the school's administration before or after school whenever possible.
- To become involved in their child's education. For example, to check homework, monitor progress, sign and return necessary papers, read information sent from school regarding their child's education.
- To follow through at home when school staff needs assistance improving a child's academic performance or behavior.
- To report to administration and conference on any concern they have regarding any dissatisfaction that occurs within the school environment.

Teacher Responsibility:

- To commit to supporting school-wide procedures.
- To do all they can do to help students learn.
- To demonstrate mutual respect for students, parents and colleagues.
- To serve as role models for the students.
- To comply with school policies regarding discipline by using preventative practices, parent conferences, school wide behavior plan and activity and by supervising students at all times.
- To support the administration regarding referral procedures.
- To create and maintain a safe, orderly and respectful classroom learning environment

Administrator Responsibilities:

- To support and maintain the school-wide discipline policy.
- To provide assistance, support and feedback regarding discipline issues.
- To communicate expectations of the school-wide discipline policy to students and their parents.
- To support and maintain a safe, ordered and respectful environment for students, teachers and staff members.

Health & Records:

Records: It is extremely important that all student records be kept current and up to date. Any changes to parent or student information, including home address, contact telephone numbers, emergency contact information, and special instructions should be delivered to the administration office as soon as possible. In the unlikely event of an emergency, it is absolutely imperative that we have correct information.

Immunizations: For the safety of all children and staff members, students must be properly immunized. An “Emergency Information and Immunization Record Card” must be completed and should have the parent’s contact information and that of at least two (2) alternate contacts in the event of an emergency. In addition it should note student’s allergy information.

Medications: The Academy does not have a registered nurse on the premises. Staff members are certified in CPR and First Aid. Minor medical situations will be handled by staff. When a student becomes ill or is injured at school, he/she will be evaluated and/or treated by the staff. If it is necessary for the student to be sent home or to a doctor, parents will be informed and will be requested to pick up their child. Under such circumstances, **NO** child will be released from campus without an adult to accompany them.

In case of an emergency, the Fire Department, Paramedics and the parent will be called. Should a life-threatening situation exist, the child will be taken to the nearest emergency facility.

In order for a medication to be dispensed, a parent or guardian must first complete a medication card provided by the office. Prescriptions and over-the-counter medications cannot be dispensed without written permission from the parent.

The academy will only administer prescribed medication that is in the original labeled container and displays the child’s full name, attending physician and dosage. Over-the-counter medication must be received in the original sealed container or it cannot be dispensed.

Students must not keep their own medication, regardless of type (i.e. inhalers, Tylenol, aspirin, cough drops etc.). All medications must be kept in the administration office and be dispensed by a staff member.

Lunch: Parents must ensure that their children are provided with nutritious, well balanced meals with all food groups represented.

Parents must be aware that transmissible diseases, such as salmonella and hepatitis can be spread very easily. These and many other diseases are the result of improper hand washing or improper food preparation or handling.

First Day at School:

The first day of school, for any child, is always a special occasion. For the first timers it is a momentous day in their life. They must deal with separation from a parent or guardian. They have to adjust to a new environment, new routine, new care givers, and other children their age that they have never seen before. It can be a difficult transition, even for those children accustomed to being left with a babysitter. Separation issues can also be upsetting to the parents, who often do not realize or anticipate the strength of their own emotions.

Anxiety and emotions associated with the first day of school are perfectly normal. If these feelings are occurring in your child, try not to be overly concerned. Staff members are fully accustomed to it and are prepared to deal with a variety of personal situations. Chances are that classroom teachers have worked through the process themselves and have already assisted many other parents and students with the same situation. They will be able to offer many suggestions to help ease the transition.

Here are some tips that you may find helpful in preparing both you and your child for those first days at school:

- Talk to your child beforehand about school and some of the things that he/she will be doing while at school.
- Attend “Meet the Staff Day” before the start of the school year and take the time to introduce your child to the teachers, the classroom, and perhaps some classmates.
- Plan to be available during the first morning of school. If possible, you may want to make arrangements to take the day off work. That way, if your child should end up needing a shortened day, you will already be available to pick him/her up.
- Make sure to allow plenty of time to get ready for school on the first morning. Both you and your child will be more anxious if you are rushed for time.

- Be prepared to deal with your own feelings as a parent. Remember to smile and act confident. Body language can sometimes communicate more than your words.
- If your child should express apprehension, accept those feelings and tell your child that you understand. Continue to be positive about the experience, and remind them of how wonderful it is going to be for them.
- When walking to the classroom remember to walk side by side with your child, and try to avoid carrying him/her in your arms. This will help minimize the physical separation.
- **It is our policy that all children entering their first year of school to be separated from the parent outside the classroom door or on the playground. Please do not enter the classroom with your child. In the event that an emotional situation arises, the disruption to the classroom will be minimal if you remain outside in the yard.**
- Try not to linger. It is best to say goodbye at the door, tell your child that you will be back soon and leave quickly and confidently. You are certainly welcome to call the administrative office during the day to find out how your child is doing.
- Arrive promptly at dismissal time. Your child will feel more secure if you arrive when other parents do.

Children usually adapt to new situations very quickly. However, on some occasions, it may take several mornings before you and your child can part comfortably from one another. Try not to judge yourself, or your child.

Dress Code:

There is a documented relationship between student dress and success, school pride, the safety and general welfare of the students and staff, and the accomplishments of the curriculum goals and educational objectives.

The school uniform is:

Top: Gray polo t-shirt with the academy’s logo

Always tucked into skirt/pants

Bottom: **Boy’s Uniform:**

Short/long solid deep navy blue pants to be worn at the waist and secured with a plain black belt.

No sagging is allowed

No skinny, cargo/capri pants, jumpers and mid-thigh shorts are permitted. No embellishments are permitted.

Girl's Uniform:

Solid deep navy blue pleated skirts worn at the waist (above the hips) and 2 inches below the knees.

Solid deep navy blue long pants are permissible. No Capri pants, jumpers and mid-thigh shorts are permitted. No embellishments are permitted.

Outerwear: Sweaters, jackets, sweatshirts, etc. must be in school colors of gray or navy blue. The logo is not mandatory.

Footwear: Plain **black** shoes or low-cut tennis shoes/sneakers, **no high top**. Black, blue/navy blue or white socks must be worn and must be 2 inches above the ankle or shoes.

School uniforms are mandatory. School dress code is in effect as long as students are in uniform, even off premises.

All students must adhere to the following standards:

- No tops that expose the chest or abdomen are to be worn (no midriffs)
- No backless apparel; tube and sleeveless tops
- Shorts must be mid-thigh, no biker shorts
- Pants are not to be oversized, baggy, sag and too long that it sweeps the ground
- Inappropriate lettering or designs will not be permitted on clothing
- Shoes with open toes or open heels are not allowed. Athletic shoes must be worn during P.E. (Physical Education) classes. For safety reasons, students wearing shoes that are deemed to be unsafe for certain activities may have activity restricted or limited access to school equipment.
- Hats are not to be worn indoors
- Female students hair must be natural (unnatural hair colors are **not** allowed) and properly styled. Male students' hair must not extend over the top of the collar in the back, over the eyebrows in the front or over the midpoint of the ears on the sides and properly groomed at all times.
- Torn or cut garments are prohibited
- No make-up including nail polish are allowed with jewelry maintained minimal, worn in good taste and should not be distracting.
- Not more than one pair earring to be worn by females. **Males are not permitted to wear earrings.**

Students who violate these dress codes will be asked to do one of the following:

- Have other clothing brought to the school by an adult. **They will remain in the classroom until clothing is brought to them.**
- Asked to leave school and return in proper attire.

In cases where it is absolutely necessary for a student to be out of uniform, the student must wear:

: a plain shirt and a plain pants in the case of boys.

: a dress or a skirt below the knee and a plain blouse with sleeves, no markings in the case of girls.

When students are unable to wear their uniform to school, their parents or guardian must provide an explanatory note to the Principal's office prior to going to the classroom.

CASUAL DAY

The following are considered to be inappropriate for Casual Days and are forbidden:

-Blouses and shirts with inappropriate messages, offensive words, designs or symbols, clothing that expose any portion of the body are slashed or have holes cut in them.

-Halter tops and strapless blouses, blouses with macaroni straps, tights, jeggings or leggings, slashed or torn jeans, pants and blouses.

-Eye liners, jewelry and any sort of make up.

-Jersey pants

-Gang related attire or paraphernalia

Students who arrive at school inappropriately dressed for casual day will be required to change into a uniform provided by the Office.

For certain field trips, teachers may recommend a certain type of apparel to be worn or may allow the trip to be "uniform optional". In all instances, teachers will advise parents by note of the appropriate apparel prior to trips.

Backpacks

A plain backpack is preferred.

School Hours:

School hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Schedule of Classes:

8:30	-	10:00	Classes
10:00	-	10:15	Break for Kinder-Garden to Standard 1
10:15	-	10:30	Break for Standard 2 to Standard 6
10:15/30	-	11:45	Classes
11:45	-	12:30	Lunch
12:30	-	2:00	Classes
2:00	-	2:15	Break for Kinder-Garden to Standard 1
2.15/30	-	2:30	Break for Standard 2 to Standard 6
2:15	-	3:00	Classes

The school ground is open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Please make sure that your child does not arrive at school before 8:00 a.m. as supervisors go on duty at 8:00 a.m. and cannot be responsible for students before this time. If it is absolutely necessary for students to come earlier you are to contact the administration office.

During school hours, all visitors, including parents and guardians, are to check with the administrative office in order to get permission to any area of the grounds beyond the fence. All visitors are to sign in and put on a visitor's badge. All parents on the grounds after school has started should check in at the office. This policy is implemented to ensure the safety of everyone on the school grounds and to allow school administration to determine who is on campus in the event of an emergency.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is key to academic success and is the responsibility of both the parents and students. Students who have good attendance generally achieve higher grades, and enjoy school more. Since much of the schoolwork completed in the classroom (i.e. discussions, participation, in-class projects, etc) cannot be made up, students should remain out of school only when absolutely necessary. Every attempt should be made to schedule appointments and vacations around the school schedule to minimize the impact on your child's academic experience.

If your child should ever resist going to school, acknowledge his/her feelings. Encourage the child to talk about it. Proceed to school. Talk with the classroom teachers about the problem, preferably outside of normal school hours. Share as much information as possible. Together, we should be able to identify the basis for your child's loss of confidence in school. Allowing your child to stay home will not solve the problem or address the issue.

Absences:

Frequent absences of students from regular classroom learning experience disrupt the continuity of the instructional process for everyone. The benefit of regular classroom instruction is lost and cannot be entirely regained even by extra-after-school instruction.

If your child is not going to be at school for any reason, it is necessary to notify the classroom teacher or the administrative office of his/her absence before the start of the school day to confirm that the absence is legitimate.

When the child returns to school after being absent, a note must accompany the child stating why the child was absent. It is the student's responsibility to check with the teacher concerning school work missed during this time. If it is an excused absence, makeup work may be given. Excused absences include illness, with a doctor's note required for absences in excess of two days, a death in the family, a family emergency or a religious event/holiday.

A student will have one day for each day absent to turn in missed assignments and class work. Students are responsible for scheduling missed tests and assignments with the classroom teacher. Some assignments and tests cannot be made up due to the nature of the assignment. If the absence is unexcused, make up work and tests will not be given and the student will receive zeros for the missed work. An unexcused absence includes, but is not limited to, failure to notify the school by 9:00 a.m. of a child's absence, a family vacation and days taken off for shopping, etc. All teachers and parents are expected to adhere to the school policies regarding make-up work and absences.

A child who arrives after 10:00 a.m. or is picked up for the remainder of the day prior to 12:00 p.m. will be considered absent for one full day. This absence will be counted in the cumulative total number of absences for that student for the academic school year.

A child who leaves after 12:00 p.m. for any reason will be considered absent for one half (½) day. This absence will be counted towards the cumulative total number of absences for that student for the academic school year.

Half-day absences and tardiness are counted against a student's daily attendance. A student will be considered for the Perfect Attendance Award **only if they have attended every school day.**

Students who are absent 20 days or more for the school year **may not** be promoted to the next class.

The number of times the student is absent each semester will appear on their Progress Report.

Arrival:

When arriving on campus for any reason, please make sure that you park in designated areas only.

The gate will be open for drop off of student at 8:00 a.m. The school will not be responsible for students who come to school before 8:00 a.m.

Students in Kinder-garden, Infant 1 and Infant 2 must be signed into classroom by the parent or legal guardian. Sheets are posted daily in the classrooms, next to your child's last name, please input the time of arrival and sign your full name.

Students who arrive after the scheduled start time for their classroom are required to first stop at the office and fill out a tardy slip. These slips are then sent with the student into the classroom. If assembly is in progress students must wait until it is completed. During the singing of the National Anthem, as respect, everyone should stand at attention, including those students who are late and not in their respective places.

The number of times the student is late each semester will appear on their Progress Report. An excessive number of tardies (6) will result in a meeting with the Principal, the parents and teachers to discuss the problem.

Dismissal

For dismissal of Kinder-garden, Infant I and Infant 2 students at 3:00 p.m., you must sign your child out on the assigned sheet with your full name and the time of departure.

The school will not be responsible for the supervision of students who are picked up later than half an hour after designated dismissal time. The school compound will be locked and security departs at 4:30 p.m.

Early Release:

As stated in the Attendance section of this Handbook, regular attendance is a key to academic success and is the responsibility of both the parents and students. Every attempt should be made by parents to have the child attend class every day, all day. If a situation arises where it is necessary to retrieve your child/children before their regularly scheduled dismissal time, you must stop at the administrative office and sign the Early Release Dismissal Log. **Only** at that time will your child/children be called from the classroom. Although we will try to accommodate in extreme emergencies, it is advisable that you do not attempt to call the Office whilst en route to the school to try and expedite the process as it adds to the burden on the administrative staff.

The parent and student are responsible for any work assigned during any absence.

Curriculum

The Shepherd's Academy will utilize the ABeka Curriculum. The Godly values and the traditional, clear, and precise instruction which the ABeka curriculum offers are fundamental to the development and progress of the students. Not only do the students learn to know about God, but they are also nurtured to have a personal relationship with Him. As they learn to do what is right in His eyes, this paves the way for the students to maintain an excellent discipline standard. The commitment is to train the students spiritually, behaviorally, and also academically. When a child's heart is right with God, it ushers in good discipline; and this, in turn, leads the way to a strong and successful education in the academics. There must be a balance between these three important components of education, and the Shepherd's Academy is committed to accomplishing these goals.

Test and Examinations:

Suitable tests are given in the various courses at intervals determined by the teachers. Tests may be used to determine each student's retention of knowledge and skills or to measure the nature of his/her attitudes, extent of understanding, or ability to think. All of these are important in educational growth and development. Every student should strive to do his/her best on these tests.

Both tests and examinations serve as a means of learning as well as measuring devices. Standardized tests which measure a student's overall achievement in certain areas or which measure a student's capacities and aptitudes are given at various times during the school year. Results of these tests are recorded and become a part of the educational record.

Grading System:

Students will receive scores based on the following scale:

- | | | |
|-----|-----------|-------------------|
| ▪ A | 95 – 100% | Excellent |
| ▪ B | 85 – 94% | Good |
| ▪ C | 75 – 84% | Average |
| ▪ D | 70 – 74% | Below Average |
| ▪ F | 0 – 69% | Not Passing |
| ▪ I | | Incomplete |
| ▪ S | | Satisfactory |
| ▪ N | | Needs Improvement |
| ▪ U | | Unsatisfactory |

Graduation:

The Academy does not carry out graduation exercise for Kinder-garden Students.

In order to graduate, a student must:

:-successfully complete the specified courses

:-Maintain a satisfactory attendance record.

:-Fulfill all financial obligations to the academy

:-Payment for graduation fees of \$75.00 Gown and Cap Fee of \$25.00

To be considered the Valedictorian and Salutatorian candidates the student's grades in conjunction with the years of attendance at the Academy are taken into consideration.

Progress Reports:

The school will have a three-term year with student grades issued at the end of each term. Parent/teacher conferences are held at the end of each term or as requested by parents or teachers. These conferences are to discuss progress or lack of progress of the student.

Reports for students who have fees in arrears are not released until the arrears are settled. **If the arrears have not been settled by the beginning of the following term the student will not be allowed to resume class until they are paid.**

Students who fail the two core subjects, English and Math, or three courses in total will not be allowed to advance to the next standard.

Homework:

The Shepherd's Academy recognizes the need for practice at home to improve academic skills. As such, students will be required to do homework. The homework assignments will vary in length and content depending on subject attending. If homework is not turned in when due, it is the school's policy to give a zero for that assignment. If a student has an excused absent, they may make up the homework and turn in the assignment one day later for each day absent with a doctor's note (required if a child misses more than two days).

Illnesses:

To preserve the health of all children and staff members, we ask that parents to not send a sick child to school. Small children are especially prone to infection. Just one sick child in the classroom places all other children at risk.

If your child is absent due to illness, please call the office to report it. This will enable us to keep proper records and inform necessary staff of your child's absence.

Any child who has a fever should not be sent to school under any circumstances.

A child who shows active signs of illness should be kept at home. If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep them at home until investigated further by a medical professional:

- Persistent stomach ache
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Deep or hacking cough even if fever is not present
- Continuous runny nose
- An undiagnosed rash
- Pink, swollen, matted and/or runny eyes that have not been treated by a physician

A child may return to school after an illness under the following conditions:

- Fever and/or vomiting are gone and temperature has been normal for **at least 24 consecutive hours without medication.**
- Energy level has returned to normal for **at least 24 consecutive hours.**
- No symptoms or signs of diarrhea for **at least 24 consecutive hours without medication.**
- Active signs of illness are no longer present

Children do not have to stay at home until all secondary symptoms of an illness disappear. As an example, some forms of nasal and bronchial congestion may linger for several weeks following a cold or flu, but the child is no longer contagious. Consult with your physician if you have questions whether or not your child should return to school.

If one of the classroom teachers observes signs of illness you will be contacted immediately to pick up your child and seek medical attention.

If your child has been exposed, or is ill from a contagious disease, we require that you contact the office so that all students and parents in your child's classroom can be put on alert. We notify students and parents in a classroom if the following diseases are present:

- Head lice
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)

- Chicken Pox
- Croup (an inflammatory condition of the larynx and trachea, especially in young children, marked by a cough, hoarseness, and difficulty in breathing)
- Strep Throat

If your child develops symptoms of an illness at school, he/she will be sent to the office and a parent or guardian will be called. If a parent does not respond within 30 minutes after the first attempt, we will try to reach an alternate emergency contact person as listed on the records.

Rainy Day

In case of a weather emergency or other situation which necessitates that students be dismissed early from school, every attempt will be made to alert parents through the media. Parents should ensure in advance that their child has a procedure to follow should this situation arise. When we are forced to close school because of bad weather, such announcements will be made utilizing **My Refuge Christian Radio, Love FM** or by telephone where possible. Parents may call at the office for information.

If it is raining during dismissal time, parents are expected to pick up their child in an orderly fashion on such occasions.

After school programs:

These will be announced as they come on stream.

Requests for private functions such as Birthday Parties:

Permission must first be obtained from the Principal's office. If granted these are to be held only during break/lunch time.

Field Trips:

There will be regularly scheduled trips throughout the school year. Notification and permission slips will be sent home to parents prior to each field trip. A completed, signed permission slip must be received in the classroom prior to departure.

Transportation for most field trips will be provided for a reasonable fee. From time to time it may be necessary to ask for parent volunteers to accompany students, especially the younger students, on field trips. A note will be sent home prior to the trip to ask for volunteers.

All field trips are a part of the learning experience of the child and therefore it is mandatory that all students must attend field trips or obtain an F (failing grade) for this activity.

Animals:

Animals are **not** allowed on campus for the safety of all the students of the school. If your child has a pet they would like to share with his/her class, this must be approved by the classroom teacher through the administrative office at least three days prior to the pet's visit. This allows for the verification of the pet's visit for all children in the classroom (i.e. allergies and fears). All animals must be restrained and accompanied by an adult. Parents or students arriving at the school grounds with unauthorized pets will be asked to remove them from the grounds immediately.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

Cell Phones:

Cell phones are strictly forbidden on the school grounds. If children need to contact their parent/guardian, they are to obtain permission from their classroom teacher to visit the administrative office for the use of the phone.

Cell phones seen on school grounds during school hours will be confiscated and placed in the front office for pick up by parents only at the end of the school day and payment of a fine of \$25.00. Further infractions will result in cell phones held until the end of the term.

Other Electronic Equipment/Devices:

Ipods, Ipads, MP3 players, laptops and netbooks are **strictly forbidden**. These may only be allowed with the permission of the Principal's office for school projects. Failure to comply with this rule will result in confiscation of the item. The item will not be returned until a fine of \$10.00 has been paid. Students will have until the end of the school year to claim items that were confiscated, if not, they will be discarded.

Toys: Are not permitted on the school premises without prior approval.

Gum: Is not permitted on the school premises.

Other Prohibited Items:

The following items are prohibited on school grounds at all times. Possession of these items on school property will result in disciplinary action which may lead to expulsion:

- Obscene or pornographic materials.
- Tobacco (in any form)
- Intoxicating liquor
- Drugs (dangerous or narcotic)
- Weapons (of any kind; this includes both real and play items)
- Explosives
- Fireworks

- Smoke or stink bombs
- Any illegal or dangerous items

Rollerblades, skateboards, radios, walkmans, and electronic games are prohibited on school grounds without the express permission from the school administration.

Lost and Found:

Many student items become misplaced while at school. We cannot assume responsibility for losses. We have a Lost and Found section in the Office for items that have been turned in. Valuable items turned in will be kept in the Office. Any items left at the end of each quarter will be donated to a local charity. Please check the Lost and Found regularly.

Communication:

The Shepherd's Academy firmly believes in keeping an open line of communication between the parents and faculty. If there is ever a situation that you feel requires the attention of a teacher, office staff member, or the Principal, please do not hesitate to communicate those feelings verbally or in writing.

Communication from the school regarding your child, school events, and other pertinent information is handled in a variety of ways:

- A monthly calendar is provided detailing all school related event.
- In most instances information will be sent via email, thereby eliminating most paper communication between parent and school. Once signed up, emails from the school will be sent on a regular basis, providing continuous updates on events, student progress, and other vital information. The preference on the mode of communication can be changed at any time by filling a paper communication form.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences: Parent/Teacher conferences may be scheduled at any time by contacting the office. Conferences will be scheduled at the end of each term to present Progress Reports.
- Written communication: Where necessary pertinent information about your child's progress, campus events, and after school activities will be sent home in written form in your child's backpack. Even if you have requested email communication, some written information will be sent home. It is the parent's responsibility to check the backpack on a regular basis to keep informed of activities that pertain to their child.
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Discipline:

Students at school are subject to observation at all times anywhere in the school within reasonable bounds. Cameras may be used to assist monitoring student behavior whenever it is deemed necessary.

The Discipline System:

- **To increase consistency among the staff members.**
- **To create a user-friendly policy.**
- **To promote positive management practices with an emphasis on prevention.**
- **To promote the importance of accepting personal responsibility.**
- **To strengthen cause and effect connections, especially the link between responsible choices and positive consequences.**

Philosophy:

Young children are individuals, eager to learn and responsive to love, attention and guidance. By nurturing and respecting each child, we foster development of a child's sense of well being. Each child's emotion and social growth is nurtured by caring staff as he/she feels uniquely accepted, safe and important. Each child feels he/she can make friends and can be an integral part of the class. Physical skills using both large and small muscles are practiced so that children become competent and feel good about their bodies. The development of cognitive skills is an important part of our curriculum. Through learning games, planned activities and lessons, children learn language skills, pre-reading skills, beginning math, science and social studies. Since children learn through discovery and exploring in their play, we offer an environment conducive to such exploration. Activities and modalities such as art, sand and water play are just a few things we utilize to stimulate the senses. Our goal is for each child to feel confident about him or herself and his/her abilities. Each child is encouraged to contribute his or her own strengths and ideas in a warm, safe, nurturing environment.

For the older students high standards are set both behaviorally and academically. Students, parents and teachers are expected to follow a clear set of standards of behavior through a comprehensive school wide discipline plan. This plan is designed to create a positive learning environment by encouraging all students to behave in such a manner that they are a credit to themselves, their parents and their school. Each teacher will develop and implement specific classroom discipline plans that are consistent with the school wide discipline plan. The goal is to create a safe, orderly and respectful learning environment in which all students' potential for learning is maximized and all children feel safe at school.

The discipline philosophy is based upon the beliefs that:

- Self-confidence develops as one develops self-control
- As self-control increases accepting responsibilities for one's action also increases.
- Mutual respect implies that others have rights which should be honored.

Procedures:

The first week of school, all teachers will develop classroom rules for their class and introduce the Code of Conduct that will be posted on the classroom walls for the duration of the school year.

The first rule of each classroom will be: All school-wide rules apply in the classroom. Violations of classroom rules will be written up on a Student Needing an Action Plan (SNAP) form. A child will be written up when they are asked to stop a behavior and they do not comply. Please note, in order for a school-wide behavior plan to be successful, all behaviors will be written up if they create a disruption to the classroom.

The SNAP form is a communication tool utilized to inform parents about a behavioral occurrence/ wrongdoing that has occurred. The SNAP form is in checklist format to allow the teacher and student to immediately identify both behavior causing difficulty and the action needed to rectify the behavior. Typically, teachers would write a detailed description of the situation that occurred to warrant a SNAP form.

If your child receives a SNAP, discuss what transpired with a focus on how to improve the behavior so it does not occur again. Your child would have already received a behavioral consequence at school. In most cases for Level I offenses, your child should not receive a second punishment at home for misbehavior.

For repeated misbehaviors and Level II offences, the Principal will meet with parents, student and teacher to address behaviors of concern. The purpose of this would be to provide a forum for all concerned parties to join forces to develop a plan to ensure student success. If your child is having repeated difficulties, this meeting is designed to provide a constructive means of addressing these problems. During the meeting a behavioral contract is to be developed outlining the plan for positive change.

The SNAP form will be sent home at the end of the same school day and is to be returned on the next school day with a parent signature. If not returned the child will miss recess/break until the form is returned. If the form is not returned at the end of two school days, a phone call will be placed to the student's home. A child will continue to miss recess/break until the form is returned.

If a child receives three SNAP forms in a term for Level I offenses, a meeting with the Principal will occur to establish a behavioral contract and consequences for the student behavior. The meeting is to be attended by the Principal, teacher, parent, student and any other staff involved.

The system of offenses developed range from mild offences (Level I) to more severe offenses (Level III).

Three Levels of offenses:

- **Level I – Mild Offenses:** Most of these offenses can be handled effectively by the teacher through normal classroom discipline. However, parents will be notified of the student's behavior by the teacher on a SNAP form.

Level I offenses include, but are not limited to: disrespect, talking back to the teacher, minor disruptive behavior in class such as talking, out of seat, disturbing others, disruptive behavior on the playground, improper language or gestures, fighting, intimidation and/or extortion and running or making loud noises in close proximity to classes in session, tardy more than three (3) times in any one semester, no textbooks or materials for class, sleeping in class, uniform infractions,

- **Level II- Greater Offenses:** If any Level I behavior are habitual and not curbed by the discipline administered by the teacher, there will be a warning and a meeting arranged with the Principal, teacher, parent and student.

Level II offenses include: blatant disrespect for a teacher, repeated Level I offenses with no improvement in behavior, any hands-on incidents, illegal activities, lying, stealing, inappropriate language or gestures, assault, destruction of school property, graffiti, deliberate destruction of another person's property, cheating on class work, courting on campus – kissing and hugging, bullying, vandalism of furniture, walls or any other school property, littering, tardy more than six (6) times in any one semester.

If a student receives a Level II offense, the parent will be notified on a SNAP form and the student will place a phone call to his/her parent explaining his/her behavior. The parent is required to immediately pick the student from school. The child will miss school for the remainder of the day. The student will be responsible for any work missed as a result of misbehavior. In addition, upon return after-school detention will occur following the offense with the classroom teacher. Detention will be served in the student's classroom for a period of no longer than 60 minutes. During that time, the student should be working on homework or reading

quietly at his/her desk. A student may not participate in any special school activities until detention has been served.

- **Level III- Severe Offenses:** A student receiving a Level III offense will be immediately sent home and receive a day out of school suspension on the next occurring school day.

Level III offenses include: repeated Level II offenses with no change in behavior, skipping a class, leaving campus without permission, fighting on or off campus, drinking on or off campus, cheating, possession of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or weapons on the school premises, or situations that deem a threat to person(s) on the school grounds which will result in immediate removal from the grounds pending an investigation to gather information regarding the situation. If necessary, appropriate authorities will be notified. Pending results of investigation, a student may be expelled from school as a result of a Level III offense. Expulsion will be immediate and at the discretion of the Principal.

Three Level I incidents of the same behavior becomes a Level II with the fourth occurrence.

Level I incidents do not accrue from term to term. A student gets to “start over” at the beginning of each term. However, if a student is having repeated difficulties with a particular behavior, the teacher may call a meeting to try to rectify the problem.

Level II and Level III incidents accumulate over the course of the entire school year regardless of whether a behavior repeats itself or a new behavior begins.

Three Level II incidents become a Level III at the fourth occurrence.

Level III incidents result in suspension and possible expulsion based on the outcome of the meeting with all involved.

Security Measures:

Emergency Response Plan:

-Regardless of the type of situation that occurs, your child’s safety is our utmost concern. Depending on the specifics of the situation, all persons on the school grounds will either be evacuated to a safe location (Evacuation) or kept on campus while securing the facility to prevent outside intrusion (Lockdown). In the event of either occurrence, parents will be notified by telephone or other electronic communication so as to be completely informed of their child’s status in the event of an emergency.

Fire Drills:

Fire drills are held at half yearly intervals throughout the school year. These drills are held so that students, parents and staff will be familiar with procedures in the event of a real emergency.

Students will become familiar with the closest emergency exit from every classroom they attend. Should a student be in any location other than his/her classroom (i.e. restroom, office) that student should exit that room and locate his/her classroom immediately and check in with the teacher.

When the fire bell sounds, all classes will leave the premises and proceed to the designated location. Students should walk quickly and quietly. There should be no talking and no hesitancy in leaving the premises during these drills.

Safety Rules for Playground Equipment:

The rules below should be read at least once a term to all students. Feel free to read them at more frequent intervals if you feel it is necessary to promote safety.

Swings:

- Remain seated at all times.
- No running under the swings.
- No jumping out of the swings.
- Use both hands to hold on to the chains.
- One person per swing.
- No swinging higher than the bar.
- No climbing on swing poles.
- No twisting or swinging side to side.
- No pushing another person.
- Most important, do not walk into the path of a moving swing.

Slide:

- One way traffic, down.
- One person going down at a time.
- Feet first only.
- Climb ladder only, not poles.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS:

The Shepherd's Academy has an open door policy. However, in order to maintain a safe environment we should appreciate if all parents and visitors would first check in at the administrative office and obtain the necessary pass. This is for the safety of all students, teachers, and staff of the school in the event of an emergency. This allows the school to account for all individuals present on the premises at that time. A parent arriving at a classroom will be referred to the office to obtain a pass.

After 8:30 a.m. all visitors must leave the classrooms to allow classes to conduct morning activities. Any visitors remaining on the premises must sign in and obtain a pass.

There is a limit of two parents observing in a classroom at a time unless otherwise agreed by the classroom teacher. Visitors are asked to sit at the perimeter of the classroom unless otherwise approved by the classroom teacher. This enables the teacher to teach and establish a rapport with the students and minimize disruption to your child's education.

Please help teachers at their request. We appreciate your help at those times. However, please sign in order to maintain a safe environment.

Please allow teachers to observe and monitor students on the playground before and after classes and during recess/break. If you need to meet or talk with a teacher, please schedule an appointment at another time so they can properly supervise the students.

The first month of school will be challenging but at the same time exciting for students, teachers and parents. The implementation of our plans will be adjusted to meet the needs of the children as the days unfold. Any such adjustments will be duly communicated to all parties. The students will feel a sense of routine after this initial adjustment period.

Welcome to The Shepherd's Academy and hope that you are as excited as we are!!!

STUDENT/PARENT CONTRACT

I have read through this handbook and discussed it with my child. By signing this, I certify that I have understood the rules and regulations to which my child will be expected to adhere. In addition, I am fully aware of and agree to the disciplinary process for any infractions committed and the consequences of said infractions.

Parent

Student

Date: _____

To be handed in to the Administration Office within two weeks of the beginning of the school year.