

Round Grove Christian Academy



STUDENT HANDBOOK

PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCHOOL

It is necessary to properly define terms when discussing a philosophy of Christian education. According to Noah Webster's American Dictionary of the English Language, the following definitions have been determined.

1. *Philosophy* – Literally, the love of wisdom. In modern use, however, philosophy is a general term denoting an explanation of the reasons of things.
2. *Christian* – Pertaining to Christ, taught by Him, or received from Him.
3. *Education* – The bringing up, as of a child; instruction; formation of manners. Education comprehends all that series of instruction and discipline which is intended to enlighten understanding, correct the temper, form the manners and habits of youth, and fit them for usefulness in their future stations.

From the above, it is concluded that a philosophy of Christian education is that which makes plain the cause, ground, principle, or motive for bringing up young people in the ways of Christ. This instruction and discipline should enable one to comprehend truth. It should cause the disposition of a student's mind to conform to the truth and to that which is right. A student should be taught that his external appearance, look, or air, as well as his customs and repetitive acts should be in accordance with Christ and His Word. He should also be instructed to serve God throughout his life-work.

God's desire is that we know Him and His son Jesus Christ "...in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. 2:3 we are to be "...rooted and built up in Him..." learning His ways instead of the false "...philosophy and vain deceit ...after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world." Col. 2:6-8

It is the responsibility of the family, church, and school to work together in teaching our children to obey God's laws, specifically the Ten Commandments. Dt. 4:9, 10; 6:4-9. This instruction will produce a proper fear and love of God and a realization that Jesus Christ is needed to control our lives. Gal. 3:24,25. As Christian character is attained, God's Spirit will guide them into future usefulness for His glory.

God has given to man all that is needed pertaining to "life and godliness, through the knowledge of... Christ." 2 Pet. 1:2,3. This knowledge, or information, is found in His Word, the Bible. Thus it is reasonable to expect the principles of every subject (which is profitable to man) to be found in the Bible. It is our privilege and responsibility to uncover these truths and to teach them to our students. 2 Tim. 2:15

Accordingly, the entire educational process of our students will be governed by the Word of God. The curriculum of Round Grove Christian Academy will be based solely on the Scriptures and principles found therein. Our method of instruction will be in accordance with the Master Teacher, Jesus Christ. In addition, the faculty, staff, administration, and all involved with Round Grove Christian Academy will be Christian and strive to live strictly by the Word of God. The operation of Round Grove Christian Academy will be governed by principles found in God's Holy Word in order for us to be true to a philosophy of Christian education.

ADMISSION

POLICY

The mission of Round Grove Christian Academy is "...to integrate its effort with the family in order to prepare each student to develop into a mature Christian, equipped to serve in society and glorify God." Therefore the school can best serve families whose goals are similar

RGCA desires for all students to succeed in our program. Thus application for enrollment of each student will take into consideration academic competence, information gained from interviews, references, previous records, and testing.

Because our school does not presently have the personnel or resources to work with children who might have significant learning disabilities and/or those who have a history of social or behavioral problems, we are unable to accept these students. This is not intended to be a reflection on the student but to keep the school from accepting students whose needs the school cannot meet.

RGCA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin in the administration of its admission policies. RGCA, in fact welcomes the enrollment of students of all races and nationalities, and accords them all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school. Final admission will be based on the policies stated above, classroom availability, and the enrollment procedures listed below.

Procedure for Admission

1. Forms: Each potential enrollee must complete the following forms in applying for admission.
 - a. Enrollment application
 - b. Immunization records and medical history
 - c. Medical release forms
 - d. Transcript of grades or permanent record
 - e. Code of Conduct
2. Admission Assessment
 - a. Those desiring to enroll in kindergarten must be five years old before Aug. 1.
 - b. All new students will be admitted for a probationary period of eight (8) weeks.
 - c. Test scores will be evaluated for new students.
3. Admission application committee:

Representatives of the school board and teaching staff will evaluate all admission information and reach a decision concerning acceptance.

4. Admission acceptance:
 - a. The RGCA “Code of Conduct” must also be signed by both students and parents.
 - b. Late Enrollment: Tuition cost will be pro-rated according to the week the student enrolls after the school term has begun.

FINANCES

Tuition Payment: The successful financial operation of RGCA is dependent upon the timely reception of tuition and fees. The cost of education at RGCA is due by the last grade card of the year. Grade cards will not be released without final payment.

The school board provides three options for tuition payments which are:

1. Single payment due by the 10th of September.
2. Two equal payments with one due by the 10th of September and the other due by the 10th of January.
3. Monthly payments taken by automatic withdrawal.

Your deposit is nonrefundable and non-transferable should the student cancel for any reason. RGCA operates on a cash basis. If hardship or emergency circumstances arise, contact the school board for financial consultation.

CURRICULUM

Pre-school Curriculum: RGCA offers half-day sessions two days a week from 8:30 until 12:00. The curriculum develops academic and social skills necessary for entry into Kindergarten and is based upon the Abeka curriculum.

Kindergarten Curriculum: RGCA offers a full-day session on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The curriculum is a structured program aimed at developing the academic and social skills necessary for entry into first grade. The Abeka curriculum is the foundation of the kindergarten program. This program includes hands-on activities in science, social studies, and crafts.

Elementary (Grades 1-8) Curriculum: Our elementary curriculum is anchored to a strong academic foundation, with emphasis on the basics. The language arts program is built an effective phonics approach. Mathematics is taught from a traditional approach. Spelling, science, social studies, music, physical education, art, and Bible complete our regular curriculum.

STUDENT EVALUATION AND HONORS

Grade cards will be distributed to all students on a nine-week basis. The grading scale is as follows:

100-90% = **A**
89-80% = **B**
79-70% = **C**

69-60% = **D**
59% and below = **F**

P for passing, **S** for satisfactory, and **U** for unsatisfactory, may be used in some classes. All students, grades 1-8, who are doing work below the C grade level throughout the school year will have notification of this sent home every three weeks (Progress Reports). A conference may be scheduled between parents and the teacher in such cases.

Promotion and Placement: Occasionally, it is recommended by the board that a student be retained in a class for a second year. Such a recommendation is only made after careful evaluation of the child's performance, his ability and social development, along with his age-grade placement.

Standardized Tests: A battery of achievement tests is administered to students in Grades K-8 each spring.

School Records: RGCA maintains a complete record, including a cumulative academic and guidance record, for each student enrolled. Disciplinary records ordinarily are not retained as a part of the student's cumulative record.

Material in each student's cumulative file shall be treated as confidential and shall be accessible to the student's parents or guardians, a court of competent jurisdiction or such other persons as the parent, guardian or administration may authorize.

DISCIPLINE

For the protection of our students and the orderly operation of our school, we feel it is necessary to have a firm and clear policy regarding discipline. Our disciplinary procedures are rooted in the following stated philosophy.

We believe discipline is more than punishment. It is a learning experience. Therefore, our primary motive is not to inflict punishment. Rather, it is to train for correction by the use of discipline. Discipline should focus on future correct deeds, not past misdeeds. Therefore, it must be administered out of love and concern and not out of hostility and frustration.

Recognizing that misbehavior generally falls into two categories, mischief and moral; we will attempt to handle each differently. Teachers are encouraged to handle discipline problems of the mischievous nature in their own classroom in an acceptable manner. This may include: detentions, assignments, and revoking of privileges.

If a student is involved in sinful behavior; showing a moral laxness, it will result in firmer disciplinary measures. Disciplinary problems in this area would include repeated mischief, lying, theft, cheating, abuse of property, disrespect for authority, willful disobedience and

fighting. These types of misconduct will be handled by either the teacher or the administration and a report of the incident filed in the student's disciplinary file. Disciplinary actions for these misbehaviors would include detentions, assignments, revoking of privileges, paddling, and in-school or out-of-school suspensions. All paddling, whether administered by a teacher or an administrator, would be in the presence of one adult witness. Parents will be informed the day a paddling has occurred.

On a periodic basis, all information concerning misconduct will be sent home to the student's parents. Parents may request copies of misconduct reports or a conference concerning their child's behavior at any time. Certain offenses will cause the accumulated information in the child's file to be sent home immediately.

Additional Areas of Concern:

1. In cases where students use profanity or sexual vulgarities a parent conference by phone or in person will be required with the teacher and/or board member. The report of a second such incident will result in an automatic out-of-school suspension.
2. Parents of any student suspected of distributing, using, or possessing alcohol, drugs or tobacco on or adjacent to school grounds or off school grounds at a school activity, will be contacted immediately. Proven possession of the above will be cause for expulsion.
3. Where students experience recurring problems of a disciplinary nature which show a lack of concern for improvement and spiritual growth, the student will be placed on a disciplinary probation for an appropriate period of time. Notice of this probationary status will be communicated to the parents in written form and also submitted to the school board. Failure on the student's part to show concern for sinful behavior or moral laxness will result in expulsion from RGCA.
4. Expulsion is the final disciplinary measure used, only after other methods have been tried without success, or where violations are considered severe by the administration.
5. The school board has the authority to carry out all of the disciplinary procedures above. Parents and students will be given opportunity to appeal an expulsion decision if they so desire.
6. At a parent's request, any after-school discipline may be delayed 24 hours to facilitate car pooling, appointments or family routine.
7. It is our over-all aim to handle all disciplinary problems in such a way as to help both the individual and the student body bring honor and respect to our Lord. A Spirit of love and concern will be a part of any action to facilitate our joint responsibility to teach our children Godly character.
8. In an effort to be Christ-like, we ask that our parents and students follow the Matthew 18 Principle whenever they feel they have been wronged.

THE MATTHEW 18 PRINCIPLE

A Christian school is made up of people- parents, administrators, teachers and students. Like any other collection of earthly mortals, the people associated with a Christian school have the potential for misunderstanding, disagreement and even wrong doing. 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, so must you love one another. By this all men 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 18:15-17 Jesus gives His formula for solving person-to-person problems:

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he 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 he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

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

One: 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 his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous escape." (Proverbs 11:9)

Two: Keep the circle small. "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his 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 after the two people level.

Three: Be straightforward. "...go and show him his 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 "Wounds from a friend can be trusted..." (Proverbs 27:6)

Four: Be forgiving. "If he listens to you, you have won your brother over." This implies that once the matter is resolved we should wholeheartedly forgive and restore the person whose fault has offended us. Galatians 6:1 reads "...if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted."

Most school problems are resolved at the two people level. Forgiveness and restoration is the normal happy conclusion. But what is the Matthew 18 principle if the individual will not "hear" you, or openly disagrees with your version of the problem? Let's say you are a parent of a student in a Christian school. You are unhappy with a teacher because you believe your child is being treated unfairly in the classroom. The two of you have met and talked together and you are

not satisfied with the outcome of the discussion. What is the next step in the Matthew 18 principle?

Five: The parent and teacher should agree to share the matter with a school board member. 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 parent and teacher should rehearse their version of the issue or issues with the school's administration. Each person should come to the meeting in a spirit of prayer and humility, 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.

Eighty percent of school problems can be solved at the two people level. Another 18% of school problems are solved at the three and four people level which includes the school's administration. This leaves 2% to be resolved at the level of the school board. The board represents the church or church community. Let's say a problem now exists and is not solvable by the normal channels of communication and established school policy. What is the next step in the Matthew 18 principle?

Six: The school board member should explain the problem to the president of the school board. The president will decide how the matter will be presented to the board. Depending on the complexity of the problem, it may be appropriate for the board president to request that all persons involved be present at a school board meeting. The goal of such a high level meeting is 1.) a clear understanding of the problem; 2.) solving the problem; 3.) reproof and correction if necessary; and 4.) forgiveness and wholehearted restoration of those who have made amends.

In summary, the Matthew 18 Principle requires that parents talk to teachers about student problems before they talk to administrators. If unresolved at the two people level, the matter is prayerfully and in an orderly fashion moved upward in the school organizational structure. This is the Lord's way of solving people-to-people problems.

A Christian school is a ministry in Christ's name. Everything that is done in the context of the school must be done in Christ's way. The world's method of solving school problems is inappropriate.

Satan would like to destroy the normal flow of harmony and fellowship in Christian school education. That is not possible if all of us follow the Matthew 18 principle of solving school problems.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MATTHEW 18 PRINCIPLE WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING FORM AT ROUND GROVE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY:

1. Parents will be required to schedule an appointment to talk with their child's teacher concerning an issue.
2. If the issue cannot be resolved between the parent and the teacher, they will be required to indicate a lack of agreement. (See form following this section.)

3. Parents should schedule an appointment with the school board concerning their inability to resolve the issue with the teacher.
4. A conference between the parent, teacher, and school board will be scheduled.
5. If the issue cannot be resolved at the administrative level, all three participants will be required to sign a resolution. (See form.)

Matthew 18 Resolution

In an attempt to apply the Matthew 18 principle, we _____
 have discussed an issue with _____ on ____ / ____ / ____.
 (teacher)

We have been unable to resolve the issue to our mutual satisfaction and request additional counsel.

 (parent) (teacher) (board member)

DRESS CODE

General Policy: We believe that it is the desire of the majority of parents that students dress appropriately for school. The following has been established as the RGCA school dress code.

Proper dress, in compliance with the established dress code, should be the responsibility of the parent and student, and not depend on the school to inspect and enforce.

Girls:

1. A girl's make-up should be appropriate and used in moderation.
2. Clothing that is shorter than mid-thigh is not permitted.
3. Dresses and skirts shall be an appropriate length. Short dresses and skirts should be avoided.
4. All dress tops and blouses should completely cover the upper body, including the shoulders and back. Any scooped necklines or V-necked dresses or blouses should be modest in front and back, and buttoned appropriately.

Boys:

1. Boys hair should be appropriately styled and not bring undue attention to one's self. It must be clean and neatly cut.
2. Earrings, or earring fillers, are not permitted.

General:

1. Jeans with tears or holes in inappropriate places will not be acceptable.
2. No sloppy or inappropriate clothing will be allowed.
3. Hats or caps may not be worn in school by male or female students.
4. Any article of clothing with lettering, wording, or drawings that might be even slightly suggestive, derogative, or in poor taste will not be tolerated.
5. Students must be clean and maintain good health and hygiene in every possible way.
6. Black military-style boots are not permitted.
7. Roller skate shoes are not permitted.

If a dress code violation does occur, the following options are available as disciplinary action:

1. The student is warned, and parents are notified.
2. A detention will be issued.
3. Parents will be notified, and the student will be sent home to change.

Many problems will be eliminated if parents will assume responsibility for enforcing the school standard of dress with their child. We feel that dress code violations are preventable with the proper exercise of parental concern and authority. Your cooperation in this area will be appreciated.

ATTENDANCE

Each absence, however short, potentially hinders a child's progress. When a student misses school for several days, this creates a hardship upon him/her as well as the teacher. Therefore, we encourage our students to have perfect attendance. Excused absences are:

1. Sickness or medical/dental appointments.
2. Death of a relative.
3. Inability to get to school due to breakdown of car or because of bad weather.

Out of town trips considered necessary by parents will be excused absences. Parents should notify the school office of such trip one week in advance whenever possible. These absences should total no more than five school days per year.

Procedure: We suggest you follow these steps in securing permission for your student:

1. **PERMISSION:** The student will bring a letter from his parents asking permission to leave at least one week prior to the day the student will be absent.
2. **ASSIGNMENTS EARLY:** Students requesting assignments may put too much pressure on the teacher by taking away from their teaching time; however, the teacher may issue assignments early.
3. **FINAL EXAMS:** Travel during final exams will not be approved. To prevent this from happening we urge you to check with the teacher as to exam dates and times.

Make-up work: From time to time, it is recognized that students may not complete assigned work as scheduled. Incomplete work assignments will be categorized and handled as discussed below.

Excused Absences: Late assignments are not acceptable except for reasons of illness, bereavement, appointments for professional services, or other extenuating circumstances. The administration requires a parental verification of an excused absence request. Full credit will be given for work completed during the allotted make-up period. Students who fail to turn in their work during the allotted time will receive a zero grade for that assignment.

For each day's excused absence, a student will receive an equal amount of time to complete his/her assignments. Extended illnesses will receive special consideration, according to need, through consultation with parents.

When absent for any reason, the student is responsible for securing from the teacher or a fellow student a listing of assignments missed and for completing those assignments on time. Teachers are not expected to pursue students to see that work is made up. Students absent from school on the day a test has been scheduled, but present the previous day, will take the test on the day he/she returns to school.

All students must bring a signed note to the teacher and have an absentee slip filled out upon returning from an absence. This must be done before being admitted to class.

Unexcused Absences: Attendance will be taken each day. Students who have 12 or more absences in any given school year, either excused or unexcused will be required to appear with their parents before a faculty and school board committee to explain their pattern of absenteeism. The committee may recommend the loss of some or total credit for the present semester. The number of days will be prorated for students entering school after school opens.

Student Early Dismissal: In an emergency, when a student must leave school early, the following procedure should be followed:

1. A written note is to be sent to the teacher by parents or guardian specifying the date, time, and reason for the early dismissal.
2. The student is to remain in class until the designated time to transport him/her has arrived.
3. If an emergency develops during the day, parents may request an early dismissal by telephone.
4. Persons taking student from the school must sign the child out.

Tardiness: Punctuality is an important lesson to learn. When a student is punctual he is demonstrating self-discipline, responsibility, and high esteem for other people and their time. Self-discipline in this area is not only important for proper academic achievement, but it is essential for the development of good habits which affect every area of life.

Detention: School detention will be assigned only by the teacher. A student missing an assigned school detention without being excused by a teacher may be assigned another detention.

SCHOOL DAYS

Hours: The normal school day shall be from 8:30 until 11:30 for A.M. Preschool and 12:15 until 3:00 for P.M. Preschool. For K-8, the school day shall be from 8:30 until 3:00. Parents should plan to have their children arrive at school no earlier than 8:00 a.m. Children should be picked up immediately upon the conclusion of their class. Children should not be on the school grounds or in the church building before or after school unless they are under the supervision of a teacher or unless some other specific arrangements have been made.

Arrival: Staff personnel are not on duty until 8:00 a.m. The school and church cannot assume responsibility for a child prior to this time unless arrangements have been made with the teacher. Students are to report directly to the classroom.

Dismissal: When dismissed from class, all students should wait in the designated area until released by the teacher. Due to lack of extra supervision, the gymnasium is not available for student use after school.

Emergency School Closing: In case of extreme bad weather, RGCA will be listed on local/area TV stations for school closing announcements. You may also check our website, roundgrovechristianacademy.org.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Fire Evacuation Procedure: In the event of fire in the school building, each teacher should calmly take students outside and obtain at a minimum 100 foot distance from school rooms and church house. Fire drills will be performed two times each school year.

Severe Storm Shelter Designation: In the event of a tornado or severe thunderstorm or issuance of warnings by the national weather service, all students should be taken by their teacher to the basement. Teachers should then position students along the south and west walls, seated on the floor with heads between their legs and arms behind their heads. Storm drills will be performed two times each school year.

MISCELLANEOUS

Change of Address: Please notify the teacher if you change your address or telephone number. (business or home)

Conferences: Conferences between parents and teachers are encouraged. These offer an excellent way to exchange information that will provide a greater understanding of the student. Teachers welcome the opportunity to confer with parents as a means to assist in the development and guidance of children. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled routinely in the fall. In the fall, conferences are scheduled for the parents of all students. Conferences may also be requested by the teaching staff when they feel that a student's performance could be improved by parent/teacher consultation. The school board is available by appointment for conferences which pertain to problems of individual students or matters of overall school administration.

Gum: Chewing gum during school hours is not permitted.

Electronics: All Gameboys, Nintendo DS, iPods, MP3 players, Cell Phones, etc. should be left home.

Hands off Policy: We expect all boy-girl related conduct to be in accord with the highest Christian ideals and principles.

Homework: Some homework is a vital part of the student's school life. However, all homework should not be confused with regular classroom assignments, which, for one reason or another the child does not complete in allotted class study time.

Medicine: The law forbids school personnel from administering drugs or medicine of any kind. This includes aspirin. However, we will be glad to assist your child with the taking of his or her medication in accordance with you or your doctor's written instructions. All medication is to be turned in to the teacher.

Music: Believing that God created music for His pleasure (Rev. 4:11) and that it is meant to glorify Him (Ps. 145-150), we at RGCA have set forth the following policy on music. Any music, whether it is labeled "secular" or "Christian" that does not contribute to Godly character will not be permitted on school grounds or school-related trips. Students will be encouraged to be consistent with this standard away from school as well.

Students are not allowed to bring radios, tape players, or head phones to school except for educational instruction where permission has been given by a teacher. The administration or teaching staff has the right to determine what music may be played at school functions or on school trips.

Telephone: All students are not to use the telephone unless an emergency arises where a student must reach his/her parent.