

VALLEY CHRISTIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK 2023-2024



We develop young leaders.

A ministry of



Brave.Church



VALLEY CHRISTIAN

FAITH • WISDOM • SERVICE

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PURPOSE

Dear Valley Christian elementary parents and students,

Any successful organization communicates and abides by a set of guidelines for its members. It is our aim to develop young leaders by discipling young hearts and minds. This handbook equips students and families with the information necessary to navigate normal situations that arise in a school atmosphere. It serves as a written document for how we agree to act toward one another and toward our Lord as members of the Valley Christian community.

The handbook is not exhaustive, and cannot address all possible situations that may arise. Rather, it strives to provide necessary rules and principles to live by to uphold a sustainable, growing, and loving Christian culture. When a particular issue arises that is not outlined in the following pages, the school will make every effort to respond in a manner that upholds Biblical truth and maintains the order necessary for the school to thrive as a Christian community.

For His purposes,
Valley Christian Schools' Faculty, Staff, and Administration

OUR VISION

To transform the world for Christ through education.

OUR MISSION

To develop courageous, thoughtful, and creative young leaders through excellent interdisciplinary, holistic, and rigorous Christian education.

In our mission statement, we identify three key leadership characteristics – courage, thoughtfulness, creativity – that we strive to develop in all of our students. And, with our unique position as an educational and faith community, we continue our sincere and earnest effort to be Christ-centered and to always be more courageous, more thoughtful, and more creative, whether it is about policy decisions or curricula design, classroom teaching or out of classroom discipleship, or in the classroom, on the athletic field, or on a performing arts stage.

Our mission statement also provides our approach to develop Christ-centered, courageous, thoughtful, and creative students. Words such as interdisciplinary, holistic, and rigorous require a cursory explanation here.

An interdisciplinary approach to education stems from a belief that God's creations are all connected, and truth takes on connected expressions in science, languages, history, and art. We believe that this is a Christ-centered approach to education and to intellectual and moral pursuits. As Apostle Paul writes in his letter to the Colossians, "All things were created by him (Christ), and for him. He is before all things, and in him, all things hold together." We want to develop in our students a perspective that ideas, concepts, and people "hold together" in Christ. There is unity in seeing the world, cosmic or human, through a Christ-centered and Christ-connected lens.

We also seek to help our students develop as flourishing human beings through a holistic approach. This means that we do not see the pursuits of character, intellect, creative expression, physical wellness, and athletic performance as either mutually exclusive or disparate efforts. We believe that whether a young person is naturally gifted in one area and not necessarily in another, it is in the effort of trying and risking failure that God rejoices in our effort to live our lives to the fullest. It is through overcoming internal limitations and external obstacles that our young people learn great life lessons that will allow them to serve God and people on this side of heaven.

Malcolm Gladwell, in his book *Outliers*, writes that in order for one to gain mastery over something, one must spend around 10,000 hours practicing whatever the desirable expertise might be. This means that real learning comes from hard work. This means that through our educational programs, from academics to athletics to artistic, we hold our students to a high standard of rigorous hard work, effort, and commitment. We celebrate our students who overcome challenging subjects, practice resilience, and grit and follow through with their commitments to their classmates, teammates, teachers, and coaches. We believe that through our high expectations of rigor, our students will take on a

habit of heart and mind to be lifelong learners that will enable them to succeed in life.

Finally, at the heart of our Christian educational approach are the enduring relationships that our students build with our teachers. Our teachers serve as our living curriculum as they exemplify their love of Christ, passion for their subject areas and expertise, and compassion for this broken world. In doing so, our teachers invite their students, through a discipleship approach, into a life-long arc of learning, growing, and serving to bring about redemption and restoration for God.

And, through our integrative, holistic, and rigorous educational efforts, we hope to impact the world for Christ through the lives of our graduates.

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

Valley Christian Schools are interdenominational in attitude and emphasis. We exist as a ministry under Valley Christian Center, an Assembly of God church. Each School Board and staff member subscribes and adheres to the changeless Word of God as expressed in the following statement of historic evangelical Christianity:

- The Bible is the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God and is considered to be the guideline for daily Christian living.
- There is one God, eternally existing in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- Valley Christian Schools affirm faith in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection and His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His ultimate personal return to this world in power and glory. Salvation is received through repentance of sin and through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

AS EDUCATORS WE AIM

- To ensure that every student is known and loved
- To model an active faith through a life of wisdom and service
- To be a blessing to our local, regional, and global communities
- To be innovative and intentional in our educational approach
- To embrace diversity
- To be well-equipped for educational and vocational excellence

EXPECTED MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES (EMLOs)

Valley Christian Schools identify five learning areas that are central to the development of our students. Each of these targets is linked to our mission statement and the pillars of faith, wisdom, and service represented on our school emblem.

- Think Critically and Solve Problems (Thoughtful; Rigorous; Creative; Wisdom) - Students will apply thinking strategies intentionally to observation, experience, and communication; and will apply creative and decision-making skills to current situations to arrive at more desirable outcomes and solutions.
- Communicate Effectively (Creative; Interdisciplinary; Wisdom) - Students will skillfully convey meaning with logic, precision, and originality, in a variety of genres, showing a proficient awareness of their audience and their purpose, and apply technological strategies for the successful communication of their thoughts.
- Pursue Intellectual Challenges (Courageous; Holistic; Rigorous; Wisdom) - Drawing from previous experience, knowledge, habits of mind, and a set of personal skills, students will identify individual academic goals and engage in active pursuit of intellectual growth.
- Apply Biblical Principles and Christian Worldview (Christian Education; Faith; Service) - Using the Bible as the authoritative reference, students will integrate its truths and principles into their lives and pursue a greater understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ for personal growth and development of their faith.
- Lead Inspirationally (Interdisciplinary; Holistic; Service) - Students will facilitate leadership in word and action that inspires others, builds unity and commitment to further Christian values to promote the common good and accomplish community goals.

THE JOURNEY

Valley Students “Discover, Think, Become.” and are prepared to enter a 21st-century world. *The Journey* is our way of describing an intentional framework for developing young people to be thought leaders, innovative problem solvers, and those with the courage to transform the world for Christ. Our mission comes to life in classrooms and student experience here.

Discover. This word describes our school age, lower schools program. From transitional kindergarten through fifth grade, our learners discover what it means to develop creativity, just as their Creator stamped His image on their hearts, to cherish one another and understand God’s great love for them, and to invest in the hard work of acquiring the foundational skills in literacy and number sense to equip them to be higher-level learners in middle school.

Think. This word describes our upper school’s middle school program. Physiologically students are developing more awareness of their own cognitive abilities. As they progress through our program they will deepen their own sense of metacognition, learning “I am a thinker.” Then, they will begin to understand new perspectives in a quest to understand that other people have thoughts and unique ideas. Lastly, our middle school students learn that thinking together, collaboration, leads to deeper learning outcomes. The - Me, You, Us - progression prepares students to be intentional thinkers as they enter high school.

Become. High school at Valley is a four-year program designed to develop young leaders to go beyond the teen years and into the world with an awareness of their foundational values, unique design, and personal mission. This is achieved through a scaffold set up for adolescents to connect (Bond, grade 9), integrate learning concepts (Blend, grade 10), invest in rigorous mind and character learning experiences (Build, grade 11), and look to the future (Beyond, grade 12). Students work with our counseling team from the start of 9th grade to build a strong and successful pathway to college or higher education that best suits their passion, purpose, and design.

ACADEMICS

Valley Christian Elementary School has been serving the Tri-Valley area since its inception in 1970. We offer a Christ-centered, quality education taught by dedicated loving teachers.

Academic Integrity: The educational program at Valley Christian is founded on a respect for intellectual property and a commitment to personal integrity. All work submitted by students should be the product of their own efforts and reflect their own abilities. A parent or tutor should encourage and help equip a student to do his/her own academic study.

Accelerated Math Program (AMP): Third - Fifth-grade students who are academically advanced in math may have the opportunity to be a part of our AMP classes. AMP eligibility is based on standardized test scores, math grades, and classroom teacher recommendations.

Classroom Placement Policy: Determining class placement for each student is a very important decision and one taken very seriously. Many variables are considered, including academics, behaviors, personality, learning styles, and needs. Each placement is examined from both an individual and group level to determine the ideal learning environment. For this reason, we do not accept requests for specific teachers as changing one student actually means changing the entire grade. However, we do accept relevant information about student needs. (This information should be sent to the Principal, by the final week of the school year.) We appreciate your understanding and support of this policy. Class lists will be posted in advance before the first day of school.

Retention and Promotion Information: Promotion of students to the next grade level is dependent upon successful completion of the year’s academic work and a demonstrated readiness for the challenges of the next grade level. Each case is handled individually.

Homework: Valley Christian Elementary School encourages the development of student responsibility through independent studies. Instructors will assign homework as necessary for the reinforcement and application of principles taught in the classroom. Students can expect to be assigned homework up to five days a week, depending upon the grade level, according to the following minimum guidelines:

TK-Kindergarten	10-15 minutes + reading
First-Second Grades	20-30 minutes + reading
Third-Fourth Grades	30-40 minutes + reading
Fifth Grade	40-60 Minutes + reading

Some students may require additional time, depending on their learning style and focusing ability. When students are at home with an illness, parents may request homework assignments from the teacher. Please email the classroom teacher by 9:00 a.m. The homework assignments and needed textbooks will be available in the pick-up cubbies in the foyer marked by grade at the end of the school day (after car line).

Bibles: Bibles are required for every student, TK through fifth grade. The version required for school use is the New International Version.

Books and Supplies: The school provides the necessary texts and workbooks. Please refer to the student supply list for materials, which must be provided by the student.

Core Enrichment Classes: In addition to core subjects, including Bible, VCES offers enrichment classes weekly as a part of the curriculum. Core Enrichment classes will be highlighted at the beginning of each school year.

Field Study: VCES recognizes that first-hand experiences, provided by well-planned field studies, are worthwhile means of learning. The teacher will provide parents with an itinerary of the trip and other pertinent information. A signed permission slip is required for each student. Students not participating in a field study due to illness or extenuating circumstances should remain at home. A student whose conduct is considered disruptive and/or unsafe to him or others may be denied participation. Unless otherwise stated, field study chaperones are not authorized to deviate from the class field study route to purchase treats, memorabilia, etc.

Attending a field study with your student's class can be an exciting and bonding time as you travel and learn together. In order to enhance the learning environment, it is necessary to have specific protocols in place to ensure the best possible educational experience. Any parent(s) that attends or drives for a field study is considered a Parent-Chaperone. It is expected that a Parent-Chaperone's attention will be fully engaged in the learning experience for all elementary students in attendance. Since our protocol is specifically directed to the students attending the field study and their safety, it is the policy of VCES that **siblings are not allowed to attend any field study.**

Drivers should check in with the school office to obtain a badge to be worn on the field study prior to reporting to the classroom. It is not permissible to make additional stops to or from the field study destination.

Drivers transporting students on any school activity must be at least 25 years of age and have required documentation. **A copy of the current proof of insurance (the form the state requires to be carried in your car) and your driver's license must be on file in the school office.** It must show policy effective and expiration dates.

All volunteers, whether driving on a field study or working in the classroom, are required to have a yearly background check done through the Megan's Law Website. This process is handled directly through the school office.

Parent Supervision of Students:

- The parent in charge is accountable for his/her designated students at all times.
- The parent is responsible to supervise assigned students. Please inform the teacher of any ongoing student misbehavior.
- Trips to the restroom must have at least one adult present while other adults supervise remaining students. Students are not allowed to leave the group alone.
- Good judgment should be used in the selection of music while transporting to and from field studies. Additionally, if the travel time is long a "G" movie may be shown.

Veracross: Veracross is a web-based student information system that allows Valley Christian parents and students to check academic progress via the Internet. Parents gain immediate access to their children's grades and attendance, and students can track their own progress.

Report Cards: Report cards are issued to students four times a year at the end of each quarter. Parents should check the report card to see the progress their child is making. Grades are available through Veracross for grades 1 - 5 and can be accessed at your convenience.

Library: Our library, located on the top floor of the building, includes a library of books and magazines, and is used for student learning. All students may check out books from the library. All books are due back one or two weeks after check out. Books may be kept longer if they are brought back and renewed in the library. Students may not check out additional books until the overdue book has been returned. Books that are damaged while checked out to a student must be replaced or reimbursed.

ATTENDANCE

In an effort to stress the importance of daily school attendance to your child's success, Valley Christian Elementary School is sending this information as a reminder of California Education Code 48200 that requires compulsory daily attendance for students 6-18 years of age. Parents/guardians that choose to enroll their children in Kindergarten are subject to this Education Code as well.

TARDINESS

Valley Christian Elementary School begins school at **8:15 a.m. (8:10 line up)** for Grades 1-5 and at **8:30 a.m. (8:25 line up)** for TK-K. One of the most important times of the school day is the morning. A valuable life skill a student can learn from his/her parent/guardian is the responsibility of arriving at school every day on time. This skill can easily be accomplished and will transfer as a valuable asset for the future. This is the time when important school news is announced, teachers define the plans for the day, homework is turned in and instructional goals are reviewed and set. The whole tone of a child's school day is set in the first part of the day. Please help support your children in learning habits that will help them be successful at school and throughout life.

SCHOOL SCHEDULE AND TARDY PROCEDURES

- 8:10 Grades 1-5 line up with their teacher for entry into the classroom
- 8:15 Grades 1-5 enter the classroom and begin their day
- 8:25 TK-K line up with their teacher for entry into the classroom
- 8:30 TK-K enter the classroom and begin their day
- After 8:15 – Grades 1-5 students must receive a tardy pass before reporting to the classroom
- After 8:30 – **ALL** students arriving at this time **MUST be signed in by a parent/guardian and receive a tardy pass to enter the classroom**
- Teachers will not accept students into the classroom without a tardy pass from the office
- Late arrival extending beyond 30 minutes will be marked as an absence and will follow the excused/unexcused absence procedures

CONSEQUENCES FOR TARDINESS

- **1st - 4th tardy in a quarter** - no penalties are given (refer to procedures listed above)
- **5th tardy in a quarter** – an email from the School Office will be sent notifying the parent/guardian that the maximum amount of tardies in a quarter has been attained.
- **6th tardy in a quarter** – a Letter Of Excessive Tardiness from the office of the principal will be sent to the parent/guardian and will include our Attendance Policy. A signature of receipt will be required.
- **7th tardy in a quarter** - will require a meeting with the principal and a notation of excessive tardiness will be placed on the student's report card. **The student must be signed in by their parent/guardian for any further tardy.**
- **8th tardy in a quarter** - will reduce the student's cumulative participation grade by 10%
- **9th tardy in a quarter** - will reduce the student's cumulative participation grade by 20%
- **10th tardy in a quarter** – will require a meeting with the School Attendance Review Board to implement further consequences

ABSENCES

Valley Christian Elementary School prepares each student to excel in our ever-changing world by providing a strong academic program in a safe, caring, and exciting environment. It is quite challenging for our teachers and staff to prepare our students if they are not in attendance. Valuable classroom lessons, experiences, and discussions are unique to the learning environment and are essentially lost. These moments cannot be recaptured or retained when a student is absent. Establishing habits such as good attendance early in their school career will prepare students to move toward personal and professional success.

Step-by-Step Procedure

1. A parent should contact the school office as soon as possible giving the reason for the absence.
2. If the absence is due to illness, parents should call the main office at 925-560-6270 by 8 a.m.
3. If a phone call is impossible for that day, an email may be sent to: esoffice@valleychristianschools.org. Absences that are not communicated by a phone call, note from home or email, will be considered unexcused.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

We strongly discourage taking unexcused absences that extend beyond Valley Christian Schools' scheduled school breaks. When families do so, they put a significant burden on their students with lessons missed and make-up work. Students who miss classes also miss out on the benefit of learning in a collaborative setting in a classroom. If an unexcused absence must take place during the school day, the parent **must** notify the school office two weeks in advance.

Another way to support your child's daily attendance is by reviewing the yearly school calendar to plan family vacations to coincide with school breaks. Examples of a few reasons that are NOT EXCUSED are:

Vacations	Visiting Relatives	Oversleeping
Car Trouble	Childcare by the student at home	Student's Birthday
Family moving from one home to another		

HOMEWORK MAKE-UP FOR AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE

When a child is not in attendance due to an unexcused absence, the child's teacher will place missed materials in a classroom folder while the child is absent. Upon the child's return to the classroom, the materials will then be given to the child or his/her parent for completion of all materials missed during the unexcused absence. Assignments will be due in accordance with the time missed (example: one week of unexcused absence = one week to complete materials). Parents will need to assist their child with the completion of missed materials since the classroom has advanced beyond the materials in the folder. Any materials not returned at the specified date will be recorded as incomplete and will receive a zero. Regular daily homework will proceed accordingly.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused absences are defined as those absences that occur and support the criteria per California Education Code Section 48205.

EXCUSED ABSENCES PER CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE SECTION 48205

A pupil shall be excused from school when the absence is:

- 1) Due to his or her illness. [**Parent/Guardian note must accompany the child upon return to school**]
- 2) Due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.
- 3) For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic services rendered. [**A doctor's note must accompany the child upon return to school**]
- 4) For the purpose of attending the funeral services of a member of his or her immediate family.
- 5) Due to an appearance in court. [**Filed and signed**]
- 6) Due to the need to secure proper immunization. [**No more than 5 days**]

HOMEWORK FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Lessons and assignments missed during an excused absence are primarily the responsibility of the student and their family. Requests for work/homework missed during the excused absence should be emailed to the teacher during the morning on the day it is needed. Homework will be available after 4:00 p.m. (4:30 p.m. on Thursdays) until 6 p.m. in the

school foyer drop-off/pick-up cubbies on the day requested. If an excused absence is due to illness, the student has two days for every day absent to complete their assignments. Other assignments that were due on the day of the child's absence, such as tests, homework, special projects, etc. would be due on the day the student returns to school. Special arrangements can be made for a child with an extended illness.

A student absent from school under Section 48205 shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the absence that can be reasonably provided and, upon satisfactory completion within the above-mentioned guidelines, shall be given full credit. Assignments received after the above-mentioned guidelines will be reduced by 50% and will be in jeopardy of receiving no grade. The teacher shall determine which tests and assignments shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the student missed during the absence.

Truancy – California Department of Education
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ai/tr/>

LUNCH SERVICE

Students may either bring a lunch or purchase their lunch. Students must eat their lunch during their assigned lunch period. Students are to eat in designated lunch areas and are responsible for keeping eating areas clean and orderly.

Our daily lunch service is provided by **Choicelunch**; a premiere food services program in California, serving over 300 schools. Lunch menus will be posted in early August and you will see daily, weekly, and even monthly options for ordering. **Choicelunch** has a customer service team who are available to answer all of your questions about ordering, lunch ingredients, loading funds, and details about the lunch program.

Contact information:
855-GO-LUNCH (855-465-8624)
customerservice@choicelunch.com

Lunch Delivery: In order to minimize classroom and student distraction during school hours, other than the occasional times a child may forget their lunch, please reserve outside lunch delivery to students for special occasions only.

Food Allergies: To keep our students with food allergies safe, a special table is available. If your child needs to sit at this table, please inform the office at the beginning of the school year. If in the event your child comes to school with a nut butter sandwich or any other “main entree” they will be given a choice of eating the sandwich in the office or purchasing school lunch.

Snacks:

Students in the TK through fifth-grade may bring a healthy snack from home to be eaten when designated by the teacher. Soda and candy are not allowed for snack time.

CAR LINE

The VCS parking lots are a no cell phone zone. Do not text and drive. Speed limit is 5 mph at all times. car line procedures have been established to ensure safety for all students. Please follow them carefully. Staff will be on duty each morning and afternoon. The yellow lined area along the sidewalk in the pick-up area is for pedestrians. Please keep this area clear of vehicles at all times.

Morning Car Line: Student supervision begins at 7:55 a.m. Students are to be dropped off and picked up in the car line loop unless directed otherwise by the car line staff. The lower loop drop-off for all grades is 7:55-8:10. Upper loop drop off for the TK-K students is 8:10-8:30. Students are not to be dropped off in the parking lot unescorted. Remain in your vehicle at all times while in the car line.

Afternoon Car Line: It is important to display the child’s last name and teacher’s name for each child you are picking up as you round the upper corner of the loop. Teachers and car line staff can quickly locate each child and have them ready for pick up.

Parents are required to remain in their vehicles when picking up their students in the afternoon. The areas where students are located are only for the teachers and students. Teachers will bring your child to your vehicle as you drive through the car line.

If you park in the upper parking lot, you must remove your vehicle by 2:30 p.m. on regular days, and 1:30 p.m. on early release days, or wait until the car line is over. Please be cautious of students and parents who are walking in the parking lot.

Students in grades TK through 2 are dismissed at 2:40 pm (Thursdays 1:40 p.m.). The first parking bay is specifically designated for parents of students in grades TK through 2 only. This car line loop expedites the car line process and operates until 2:50 p.m. (Thursdays 1:50 p.m.). If you have students in other grades to pick-up, please come through the 3rd through 5th-grade car line.

Grades 3 through 5 are dismissed at 2:50 p.m. (Thursdays 1:50 p.m.). Car line begins when all classes are brought out to the pick-up areas at the upper loop (Grades 3 & 5) and bottom of the stairs (Grade 4), approximately 2:55 p.m. (Thursdays 1:55 p.m.). The car line ends at 3:00 p.m. (Thursdays 2:00 p.m.) and the remaining students will be taken to CREW.

Afternoon Car Line Guidelines for Parents:

- Please follow the instructions of the individuals directing traffic, whether you are *driving or walking* to pick up your child.
- **The speed limit is 5mph at all times.**
- **Respect our ‘No Cell Phone’ Zone – signs are posted.**
- Please do not pull around cars unless instructed.
- Please don't stop where your student is seated. Pull all the way to the crosswalk allowing us to load more cars.
- Please keep the sign with your student's name and teacher visible.
- Please refrain from having conversations with teachers during car line.
- Please do not arrange to drop off, pick up, or exchange items during carpool.
- *If walking*, please use the designated crosswalks. One is located at the base of the loop and the other in the middle of the first bay of cars next to the softball field.
- Please do not walk up to the car line area to pick up your students.
- If possible, please leave your pets at home.
- Please remain in your car to pick up students. Teachers will load your students.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Valley Christian Schools endeavor to provide spiritual instruction through students' relationships with our teachers as they exemplify what it means to be a living curriculum of faith, wisdom, and service. We also seek to develop a school culture, academic curricula, and co-curricular activities that reflect the virtues of faith, wisdom, and service. In addition, we encourage each student to strengthen his or her personal faith through individual Bible study, active involvement in a Bible-teaching church, and spiritual instruction in the home.

Biblical Studies: A period of each day is set aside for specific and relevant Bible instruction. Each child is encouraged to develop his/her Christian faith with understanding and personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as his/her Savior and Lord. Each child learns how to use the Bible and is introduced to the entire spectrum of Biblical truth.

Chapel: Chapel is scheduled weekly on Wednesdays (times will be noted in the Daily Bell Schedule) and is a time for students and faculty to worship together. It includes singing, prayer, and a short message from God's Word. Chapel is led by faculty and staff as well as a variety of outside speakers. The last Wednesday of each month will be a combined worship chapel.

Christian Example and Leadership: Our teachers are well-grounded in the Bible and mature Christian living. They come to their profession with a sincere desire to serve the Lord through their teaching and to encourage Christian principles of living in the many details of the classroom activities.

Prayer: The child is led in the practice of prayer each day, as the school day begins, before lunch, in special need or in time of trouble. He/she learns to pray privately, as well as with a group, and to share his/her needs with others as they

share their requests with him/her.

Scripture Memorization: Memorization of scripture is a good mental discipline and is important in guiding positive Christian thoughts and actions. A child's ability to memorize and develop great mental facility is often underestimated. With this in mind, scripture memorization is encouraged throughout the year.

Service Projects: Valley students learn the Christian value of serving others through annual community-wide service projects such as Samaritan's Purse: Operation Christmas Child, Oodles of Noodles: Food Pantry Stock, Kids Against Hunger, and more.

COMMUNICATION

The teachers will communicate regularly with parents about their students through class newsletters, emails, and phone calls.

For questions outside of the classroom, parents may contact:

- General questions – esoffice@valleychristianschools.org
- Admissions/Re-Enrollment/Financial Aid – admission@valleychristianschools.org
- Extended Day Care – Crew@valleychristianschools.org
- Financial Matters, Donations – accounting@valleychristianschools.org
- Parent Involvement – ptf@valleychristianschools.org
- Lunch Program – esoffice@valleychristianschools.org
- Elementary School Calendar – esoffice@valleychristianschools.org
- Communications, Marketing – admission@valleychristianschools.org

Change of Address: Please notify the office and teacher promptly of any change of address or telephone number (home, cell, work, physician, etc.), place of employment, or family status.

Email: The most efficient way to communicate with Valley Christian Schools' faculty and staff is via email. Every faculty and staff member has an email address. Faculty and staff email addresses are comprised of the individual's first initial and last name, followed by "@valleychristianschools.org" (Example: Jane Doe – jdoue@valleychristianschools.org) You should anticipate an answer to your email within 48 hours unless it is over a weekend or a holiday. Please be reminded that the teacher's primary responsibility during the school day is to teach your students. Responses to emails most often will occur at the end of the day. VCS email lists are not to be used by parents for personal use (such as solicitations, invitations, etc.).

When using email:

1. Please send only non-vital messages by this medium. For example, do not use email to inform a teacher that your child will be picked up by someone other than authorized contacts. A teacher may not have time to read your message in a timely fashion. Instead, call the elementary office to be sure your message is received and clearly understood.
2. Your child's academic progress, learning expectations, or behavioral issues are best addressed through a telephone conversation or by scheduling a personal conference with your child's teacher. An email message on these matters is not appropriate.
3. Please remember that email is not necessarily confidential. Confidential information should be conveyed by phone or personal contact.
4. For all medical or health concerns, please contact the office child's by phone.
5. Please keep all contacts professional. School email lists are not to be used for personal use such as solicitations, invitations, etc.
6. A mass email to the staff must be approved by the Principal before sending the email. The School maintains email accounts for teachers to facilitate parent/teacher communication and internal staff communication. The school reserves the right to block or filter email messages to staff that is not directly related to school business or to the educational mission.

Classroom Folders: The TK and Kindergarten students take home a folder daily containing schoolwork and information. Students in grades 1st-5th take home a folder weekly on Friday with similar content. Parents should carefully examine all school assignments and communications.

Newsletters: Each student will receive a weekly grade-level newsletter containing assignments as well as school and classroom updates.

Grievance and Conflict Resolution: The Valley Christian Schools' grievance procedure is based on the Biblical principle set forth in the following scripture:

"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." Matthew 18:15-17

Steps For Handling a complaint about a policy, procedure, or employee of Valley Christian Schools:

1. The parent and student meet privately with the Valley Christian employee immediately involved with the complaint to seek resolution with a spirit of reconciliation.
2. If unresolved, the parent meets with that employee and an administrator to seek resolution with a spirit of reconciliation.
3. If unresolved, the administrator informs the Head of Schools and the Valley Christian Schools Committee of the issue.
4. The problem is presented to the Schools Committee who calls upon the parties involved as necessary, all in a spirit of reconciliation.
5. If unresolved, the problem is presented to the Valley Christian Deacon/School Board for resolution. The School Board may give guidance to school administrators regarding the parties involved as necessary, all in a spirit of reconciliation.

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Parent-Teacher conferences are formally scheduled at the beginning of the second quarter. Parents will be notified regarding dates and times. However, conferences may be held at any time during the school year and may be arranged by contacting your child's teacher. If parents have any questions regarding their child's progress, they are encouraged to schedule a meeting. Both parents are welcome and encouraged to participate in parent and teacher conferences, discipline meetings, academic support meetings, and any other conference called by school personnel regarding the student's education. **If parents are separated or divorced, the custodial parent is asked to share scheduling information with the non-custodial parent.** The school will provide scheduling information to the non-custodial parent only if the school receives a written request to do so.

Phone Calls to Teachers: Teachers do not have a direct telephone line to their classrooms. You may email a teacher directly or leave a message for the teacher to return your call.

Website| www.valleychristianschools.org: The VCS website contains information about our school in general. It is a resource for VCS parents, and others in our school community, to better understand our school at large. Information for prospective parents and those seeking employment can be found on the site, as well.

A weekly e-bulletin will be emailed to all parents and faculty. The weekly Life on the Hill Bulletin, in combination with our website and teacher communication, is the most up-to-date guide and source of information during the school year.

Divorced and Separated Parent Involvement: Valley Christian School's administration recognizes that while the parents of some students may be divorced or estranged, both have the right to be informed of, and involved in, their child's educational process. Despite such estrangement, both parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the child's education, to the extent appropriate. Generally, both parents have the right to attend school programs open to parents and patrons, volunteer in their child's classroom, or eat lunch with the student. The parent's right is not negated solely by the fact that he/she is the non-custodial parent. Such visitation will be limited only if the school has received a copy of a court order specifically restricting the parent's visitation with the child by 1) denying the parent's visitation rights or 2) requiring supervision of the parent's visitation with the child. The school does not have the responsibility to supervise visitation between a parent and his/her child and, thus, will not allow parent access in the school setting.

Release of Student to Someone Other than Custodial Parent: Only the custodial parent has the right to authorize the removal of the child from school property during school hours. If the custodial parent desires the student to be removed by another individual, he/she must inform the school in writing that such a party is authorized to pick-up the student. Such authorization shall be assumed to be generally applicable unless the custodial parent specifies that it is limited to a specific date and time.

Report Cards and Student Records: Both parents have the right to receive report cards and review student records of their minor children. If the parents are separated or divorced, report cards will be sent home to the custodial parent and mailed to the non-custodial parent (if the school has been provided with the current contact information). It is the parent's responsibility to keep the school informed of any changes in their contact information in a timely manner.

Parent-Teacher Fellowship: PTF is a Parent Volunteer Group coordinated by Parent Volunteer Coordinators. In conjunction with the administration, the purpose of PTF is to support and strengthen Valley Christian through prayer, community building, and fundraising support. PTF works towards bringing greater unity and community in the school by coordinating fellowship/social opportunities with parents, teachers, and students. PTF works to enhance the programs of Valley Christian in a variety of ways that may include the following: fundraising to assist in providing for non-budgeted items, offering encouragement to the staff through a variety of expressive acts of teacher/staff appreciation throughout the year, providing practical assistance to the classroom teachers, organizing community events for students and their families, enhancing communication with parents, and offering encouragement to the student body.

Family Involvement Hours: Recognizing that no school can be strong and successful without enthusiastic participation by the parents and families of each student, our objectives are to build community events that enhance the relationship between the home and school. There are several ways to volunteer. The Parent Volunteer Coordinators will send out information regarding the activities provided throughout the year, some of which include Room Parent, Staff Appreciation, and Community Building Events.

DRESS CODE

A uniform is required for grades TK - 5 every day and on all field trips unless otherwise specified. A variety of daily uniform options are available for purchase through our online store provided by Tommy Hilfiger www.globalschoolwear.com. Find Valley Christian Schools by using the code VALL01.

All items available on the website are acceptable daily uniform options.

BASIC DAILY UNIFORM OPTIONS

GIRLS	BOYS
<p><u>Tops</u> Short/Long Sleeve Polo with Logo - Red, White, Black, or Gray Short/Long Sleeve Blouse - White V-Neck Sweater Vest with Logo - Red, Black, or Gray V-Neck Sweater Long Sleeve (Logo Optional) - Red, Black or Gray</p>	<p><u>Tops</u> Short/Long Sleeve Polo with Logo - Red, White, Black or Gray Short/Long Sleeve Oxford Shirt - White V-Neck Sweater Vest with Logo - Red, Black or Gray V-Neck Sweater Long Sleeve (Logo Optional) - Red, Black or Gray</p>
<p><u>Outerwear</u> Sweatshirts (Logo Optional) - Red, Black, or Gray Cardigan Sweater (Logo Optional) - Red, Black, or Gray Fleece Jacket with (Logo Optional) - Red, Black, or Gray</p>	<p><u>Outerwear</u> Sweatshirts (Logo Optional) - Red, Black, or Gray Cardigan Sweater (Logo Optional) - Red, Black, or Gray Fleece Jacket (Logo Optional) - Red, Black or Gray</p>
<p><u>Bottoms</u> Twill Pants - Black, Khaki Twill Shorts - Black, Khaki Skirt/Skort - Khaki, Plaid, Heather Gray Jumpers - Khaki, Plaid Polo Dress - Navy, Red Jeans – Blue or Black (Not available through Tommy Hilfiger)</p>	<p><u>Bottoms</u> Twill Pants - Black, Khaki Twill Shorts - Black, Khaki Jeans - Blue or Black (Not available through Tommy Hilfiger)</p>
<p><u>Socks</u> Red, White, Black or Gray ankle, crew or knee length Red, White, Black or tights Red, White, Black or Gray ankle length leggings (Patterned socks or tights within the color scheme are acceptable) <u>Shoes</u> Lace-up or Velcro Athletic Shoes with support</p>	<p><u>Socks</u> Red, White or Black ankle, crew or knee length (Patterned socks within the color scheme are acceptable) <u>Shoes</u> Lace-up or Velcro Athletic Shoes with support</p>

Uniform sweatshirts, sweaters, and jackets are required for school **indoors**.
 A non-uniform rain jacket or cold weather jacket may be worn **outdoors**.
 Uniform outerwear does not require a logo with the exception of the Sweater Vest

CHAPEL UNIFORM

GIRLS	BOYS
Khaki or Plaid Skirt/Skort, or Khaki Pants White Blouse with Collar, White Polo or Turtleneck Black or Red V-Neck Sweater Vest with Logo Solid Red, White, Gray or Black Socks or Tights (Footless tights must be near ankle length)	Khaki Shorts or Pants White Oxford Shirt, White Polo or Turtleneck Black or Red V-Neck Sweater Vest with Logo Solid Red, White, Gray, or Black Socks

Jeans that comply with the school dress code may be worn on Non-Chapel days:

Dress Code - Properly fitted, medium to dark blue or black dye; straight-legged, boot cut or skinny jeans with minimal stitching on the pockets.

Not Dress Code - Carpenter, Capri, jegging, or baggy style jeans. Jeans that are frayed, torn, or embellished (including patches).

Daily Requirements (All Students)

1. Clothes neat, clean, and in good repair.
2. Extremely tight or oversized clothes are not permitted.
3. Clothing and school supplies with slogans or pictures associated with violence, immodesty, disrespect, or anything which conflicts with the philosophy of VCS are not permitted.
4. Lace-up or Velcro athletic shoes with support each day unless it is a specified dress-down day. Enclosed heels and toes are required for all footwear. Slip-on, flip-flops, sandals, and other footwear that would be deemed unsafe on the playground are not allowed.
5. For safety on the playground, boots are not allowed. (On rainy days, rain boots are permitted.)
6. Avoid jewelry such as long necklaces and other accessories, which could contribute to physical injury during play.
7. No tattoos of any kind, including temporary, are allowed.
8. Hats, caps, and hoods may be worn outdoors.
9. Hair should be a natural color.
10. The layering of Valley Christian shirts is permitted. Long-sleeved shirts used for layering are to meet the uniform requirements. (See Uniform Requirement Chart)

Additional Daily Requirements (Girls)

1. Bike/stretch shorts are to be worn under dresses and skirts.
2. Uniform skirt/skort/jumpers are fingertip length or longer.

Additional Daily Requirements (Boys)

1. Earrings may not be worn at anytime.
2. Hair is to be neat and trimmed.

Designated Dress-Down Days (Girls)

1. Skirts and dresses are fingertip length or longer, and should not be excessively tight or sheer.
2. Bike/stretch shorts should be worn under dresses
3. Dresses must cover the shoulders.
4. Blouses and tops are to be of modest style.
5. Pants or shorts must be in good repair, not faded, frayed, tight-fitting, or excessively loose.
6. Shorts must be at least fingertip length or longer.
7. Capri length pants or jeans are acceptable.
8. Jeans must comply with the school dress code.
9. Tights or leggings must be worn with a skirt, dress, or shorts that conform to the dress code length standards.

Designated Dress-Down Days (Boys)

1. Pants or shorts must be in good repair, not faded, frayed, tight-fitting, or excessively loose. Jeans must comply with the school dress code.
2. Shirts may not be cut-offs or tank tops. Sleeveless shirts that are not tank tops are acceptable.

Final decisions in the interpretation of the dress standards reside with the school administration.

Dress Code Violations: The classroom teacher will notify parents in writing, if their student is in violation of the VCES dress code. Repeat violations will result in parental notifications by an administrator. Failure to comply will result in the student's removal from class until the violation has been corrected.

EXTENDED CARE (CREW)

CREW is available for parents from 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Children are supervised during these periods at designated locations. All children arriving on campus before 8:00 a.m., and all who enter CREW after school, will be billed automatically. If you are picking up your child after school, he/she will wait in car line. At 3:05 p.m., children who remain in car line will be escorted to CREW. At 3:15 p.m. the student's account will be billed for the afternoon. Children are not to be left unattended on campus. (Please see addendum for temporary CREW policies.)

CREW Hours:

7:30 – 8:00 a.m.
2:40 – 6:00 p.m. (TK – 2)
2:50 – 6:00 p.m. (3 – 5)
11:35 – 6 :00 p.m. ½ days (TK – 2)
11:45 – 6:00 p.m. ½ days (3 – 5)
1:40 – 6:00 p.m. Thursday Early Release Day (TK – 2)
1:50 – 6:00 p.m. Thursday Early Release Day (3 – 5)

CREW Fees:

A one-time Registration Fee will be added to the first bill or may be paid separately at time of registration.

CREW closes promptly at 6:00pm. A late fee of \$5.00 per minute after 6:00 p.m. is charged for each child not picked up on time.

CREW fees are billed monthly, or may be paid in 1, 2, or 4 installments.

A late fee will be charged on invoices not paid within 15 days of the invoice date. For each additional 15 days of delinquency will result in another late fee. If you have questions regarding your bill you may contact the CREW Office directly at. If we have made an error, however, you will not be charged.

Our CREW Handbook is available for your reference.

After-School Enrichment Programs: VCES strives to provide a variety of contracted after-school enrichment programs. These programs are provided for a separate registration fee per session. Each session is dependent upon student enrollment in the program. A list of contracted after-school enrichment programs will be provided at our Back To School Night.

SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICIES

Security: The safety of your children is of utmost importance to us. The front doors are locked and coded. Other doors with access to the elementary school building are locked or attended by a staff member. Door codes change throughout the year.

Playground: Students are allowed on the playground with adult supervision. Outdoor recess provides students with time to be physically active and to socialize with peers. Only on rainy and/or extremely hot or cold days will indoor recess be

held. Outdoor and indoor recesses are supervised for the safety and well being of every student. Times for recesses are noted in the Daily Bell Schedule for each classroom.

Safety Drills: Fire drills, earthquake drills and lockdown drills will take place periodically throughout the year. At the beginning of school, teachers will review all procedures with students.

Health Topics: Our staff is trained to assess illness and injury occurring at school, provide acute emergency care and referrals for specific health care needs, and collaborate with parents/guardians regarding individual student health concerns and issues. Please contact them should you have any concerns regarding health-related issues. A health record is maintained on each child throughout his/her school years. The results of all testing, e.g. vision, hearing, physical exams, immunizations, diseases, etc., are recorded. Please provide the office staff with reports of all injuries, immunizations, and major illnesses so that records can be kept up to date.

Accidents: In the event of an accident or injury requiring immediate medical attention, an ambulance will be called. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents cannot be reached immediately, the school will attempt to reach the physician listed on the child's health form. Other minor injuries or accidents will be appropriately treated by the faculty and staff.

Illness: Students who become ill during the day will be taken to the office staff who will determine if the child should go home. If the student has vomiting or diarrhea, a temperature of 100-degrees or higher, or an injury requiring medical attention, parents will be contacted to pick up the child. We encourage parents to pick up sick children within 30 minutes to make your child comfortable and to prevent the spread of illness. If we are unable to reach a parent, we will begin calling persons listed on your emergency contact form.

Students returning after an illness may not return to school until his or her temperature has been normal for 24 hours without the aid of medication or until 24 hours after any vomiting or diarrhea has stopped. If the student is being given antibiotics, please do not send him/her to school until at least 24 hours after the first dose.

Sick children are not permitted in CREW.

Communicable Diseases

It can be difficult to make an early morning decision as to whether to send your child to school or not. Minor physical symptoms may be indicative of allergies, contagious illness, or even school avoidance. Please abide by the following procedures when deciding whether or not to send your child to school.

Conjunctivitis: Pink-eye can be extremely contagious, and is common among young children. Please seek the advice of your child's pediatrician when you notice red, weepy eyes. Many children will develop these symptoms as a result of allergies, though others may need treatment for bacterial conjunctivitis. Generally, children who awaken with yellow crust or discharge from their reddened eyes will require a pediatrician's intervention. If antibiotic drops or ointment is required, your child should remain home for a 24-hour period after treatment is initiated.

Coughs: Frequent or productive coughs can be significant physical symptoms. It can indicate the worsening of a cold or allergy, or it could be a sign of secondary infection. If your child's cough is worse than you might expect with a common cold, you need to consult the pediatrician. A severe cough can distract your child and those around her in a classroom setting.

Diarrhea: A single episode of watery diarrhea DOES warrant exclusion from school. It would be uncomfortable and embarrassing for your child to have another episode while at school, and there are infection control issues to consider as well. If diarrhea is persistent or accompanied by fever, rash, or general weakness, consult your child's pediatrician and keep your child out of school until the illness passes.

Fever: A temperature greater than 100 degrees is an important symptom that should not be overlooked. Children should not attend school with a fever and **MUST BE WITHOUT FEVER FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL**. Students should not be given fever-reducing medications (e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen) and sent to school.

Head Lice: Head lice are common among school-aged children. They are not a health hazard or a sign of being dirty and are not responsible for the spread of any disease. The most common symptom is itching. Lice do not jump or fly. Most often they are passed through head-to-head contact as a result of the sharing of personal items (combs, brushes, hats, pillows, etc.). Parents are asked to notify the school if their child becomes infected with lice. If lice are found on a student during the school day, the front office will notify the parents. It is best to consult with your child's pediatrician, pharmacist, or lice specialist for treatment instructions. Your child should not return to school until treatment is completed.

Sore Throat: Many children will experience a sore throat from allergies, a cold, or sinus drainage. This is not a reason to keep your child home. Unfortunately, it is often difficult to discern a minor symptom from a serious strep infection. Strep is highly contagious and often makes its presence known with a sudden complaint of sore throat, fever, and many times a stomach ache, and/or headache. A child with these symptoms should see the pediatrician for diagnosis and treatment, and should not return to school until he is without fever and has been on antibiotics (if necessary) for 24 hours.

Vomiting: A single episode of vomiting, in the absence of other symptoms, may not be a reason to exclude a child from school. If you elect to send your child to school, please make sure that you leave a number where you can be reached should symptoms recur.

Medication During School Hours: We frequently receive requests from parents to administer medication. There are certain requirements specifically mandated by the State of California that must be met before we are permitted to assist. A statement listing these requirements can be obtained from the school office. If your child is going to require medication to be administered at school, either on a short-term or long-term basis, please request and read a copy of the medication information sheet. All medical treatments must be stored in the school office, administered in the office, and supervised by a staff member.

PE Excuse: A note is necessary in order to be excused from P.E. This note is good for one specific time only.

Recess Excuse: If you want your child to stay inside during lunch, recesses, or before and after school, he/she must have a note stating the reason. Be sure you are specific as to the number of days your child should be kept in.

Smoke-Free Campus: VCS is a smoke-free environment; this includes e-cigarettes.

Nut-Free Zone: Valley Christian Elementary is a NUT-FREE zone for students. Please do not bring any food products with nuts. Please refer to the Nut Policy guidelines found online or in the school office.

Immunization and Medical Policy: Children must meet the health requirements of the California State Health Department and the Alameda County Health Department. Children will not be admitted without proper immunization. California state regulations require that children entering school be up-to-date on all immunizations and that the immunizations be verified by a record from a doctor or clinic. Each child entering our school must have a complete physical within one year prior to starting school. Proof must be submitted before school begins.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Students in the Elementary School are learning appropriate school behavior and self-control. They are beginning to deal with these concepts on a developmental level equivalent to their age. They learn by practicing the correct behaviors and actions, but also through correction and reminders. Learning appropriate behavior is a time-consuming process but one to which we are committed. Please review the following student behavior expectations with your children. Please partner with us and review the following behavioral expectations:

- Students are expected to speak, listen, and act respectfully.
- Students are expected to keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in ways that honor the Lord in both their behavior and speech.
- Students are expected to be positive and encouraging in words and actions.
- Students are expected to follow directions promptly
- Students are expected to respect and care for property. Damaged or destroyed property belonging to the school is to be replaced by the student(s) responsible.

Although not exhaustive, the following guidelines provide boundaries and structure for student conduct and are considered unacceptable behavior:

- Repeated, negative conduct (threatening, taunting, intimidating, excluding, making fun of) in word and/or action toward one student or a group of individuals
- Excuses like, "I was only kidding," or "I was just joking," or "I didn't mean to hurt him/her," does not remove a student from being responsible for the choices they make
- Hitting and/or any physical action is taken toward another individual with the intention to hurt or insult
- Actions and words that pressure others, and may often lead to poor choices
- Students possessing objects or materials designed to communicate violence will be in violation of school policy and are subject to discipline action. Please be aware that some of the students may have replica pistols in their possession. Please remind them that firearm and firearm replica toys made of cardboard, plastic, metal, paper, clay, stick or other materials designed to resemble firearms are not permitted on the school campus. If the object has a handle, a trigger, and barrel design it will be considered to be a firearm replica.

Discipline Philosophy: We believe that God created man in His own image and that each child is of infinite worth as an individual person. This means that we will treat each child as a unique individual who is worthy of personal nurturing and instruction. Our desire is to administer correction that focuses on the relationship and reaches into the heart. The goal is to create a safe and secure environment where all students are growing and learning. The following foundational considerations will apply to Valley Christian Elementary School's approach to discipline:

- Discipline should be restorative: designed to get the child back on track to what is right.
- Discipline should be related: in accord with the student's choice(s).
- Discipline should be respectful: preserves the dignity of the child and the classroom.
- Discipline should be reasonable: an appropriate level, neither too severe nor too lenient.

Disciplinary Practices (*): Most disciplinary problems involve minor infractions of school rules and are handled by the classroom teacher. Minor infractions include: running in the halls, pushing ahead in line, talking at inappropriate times, interrupting, or other similar breaches of school etiquette. A phone call or note home may be used to notify parent of minor behavior issues. Should these infractions develop into a pattern of misbehavior, the teacher will consult with the Principal to develop an age-appropriate behavior plan.

Serious infractions, such as defiance or arguing with the teacher, physical or verbal threats, or other actions that display disrespect or belligerence, will necessitate the removal of the student from the class or group. The Principal will discuss the seriousness of the matter with the student and work to find an acceptable solution to the conflict. The Principal will notify the parents of the behavior and a copy of the Behavioral Referral will be sent home. The most serious infractions involving physical or emotional harm may result in an immediate in-school or at-home suspension without prior notification to parents. Valley Christian has a Hands-Off Policy.

***Administration reserves the right to amend discipline protocol depending upon the extent and severity of the situation.**

Damage to School Property

Any damage to or loss of school property (books, windows, etc.) caused by neglect, vandalism, or inadvertent conduct (i.e., broken windows) on the part of a student will be charged to the student's account. Parents will be responsible for paying for the repair and/or replacement of the damaged property.

Suspected Child Abuse Policy

The State of California requires Valley Christian Elementary School to report allegations of suspected child abuse to the proper governmental authority when there is a reasonable suspicion or reasonable basis for believing that physical or emotional abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, inadequate supervision, or other forms of abuse have occurred. While the school is expected to communicate with parents regarding the well-being of their children, the administration is placed between the parent and the state, acting on behalf of the parent and in accordance with state law. It is the school's policy not to contact parents in advance of making a report to legal authorities. Appropriate school staff will make such reports in the best interests of the affected child and do not, once reasonable suspicion is established, have any legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation and review. The school may also

undertake an inquiry prior to making a report to determine whether or not there are sufficient grounds to require reporting.

Technology

We believe that Internet access and the use of technology will help the students develop skills that are an essential part of learning. The school's information technology resources, including email and Internet access, are provided for educational purposes. These opportunities also pose challenges to ensure that precautions are taken to limit access to inaccurate, potentially offensive, or controversial material. The school takes precautions to restrict access to material through the use of filters/safeguards/blocks; however, it is impossible to control all such material. The most important way to safeguard children while using technology is to monitor their use at school and at home. This is a joint responsibility shared by all members of the Valley Christian Elementary community: faculty/staff, parents, and students.

The Acceptable Use of Computer and Information Technology Resources Policy will be presented and discussed during the student's regularly scheduled computer class. Adherence to this policy is necessary for continued access to the school's technological resources.

Students using school computers are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior and will be held responsible for their behavior. The school's computers are to be used only for school-related purposes. General school rules for behavior and communications apply.

General Guidelines: If a student does bring an electronic mobile device (in the backpack) to school, the parents will assume responsibility for those devices. There is an inherent risk that personal electronic devices could be lost, damaged, or stolen while at school, and the students will take full responsibility for their own device. VCES is not responsible for storing, charging, vandalism, theft, or fixing any device. Devices must be labeled with the student's name prior to usage in school. Students may not connect to the school network at any time with any mobile device. The usage of the electronic device is left to the discretion of the classroom teacher in accordance with their curriculum and classroom protocols.

Code of Conduct: Students are not to intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's code of conduct (such as messages that are offensive, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass).

Communication: Students should only communicate in ways that are kind and respectful.

Destruction of Property: Students are not to destroy physical property such as computer equipment or electronic property such as student work, projects or files.

Inappropriate Material: In cases where a student inadvertently accesses or discovers inappropriate, offensive, threatening, or controversial material, the student should notify the attending teacher immediately and should not share with other students.

Logging Out: When students are finished using a computer, they are to log out.

Plagiarism: Students are not to violate copyright laws and copy information directly from a website or other source without proper citation.

Private Information: Students are not to distribute private information about others or themselves. Some websites request that forms be completed before accessing their page. Students should never fill out an Internet form with personal information, unless the teacher instructs them to do so.

Supervision and Monitoring: Teachers and network administrators monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with this policy. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks in order to further the health, safety, discipline or security of any student or other person, or to protect property.

Violation Consequences: Violations of the above rules may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's computers and information technology resources. The use of computers is a privilege.

MISCELLANEOUS

OFFICE PHONE USAGE: Students are permitted to use the office phone if needed, with teachers' permission. These calls should be limited to emergency messages.

USE OF CELL PHONES: We realize that some Elementary School students have cell phones, but prefer that students do not bring cellphones to school. If a student must bring a cell phone to school, the phone must remain powered off and in the student's backpack all day. If needed, students may use the office phone during the day to contact parents.

TOYS, ELECTRONIC GAMES AND OTHER ITEMS FROM HOME

Students are not to bring toys, collectibles, balls, electronic games or other items that distract from learning to school. However, appropriate items may be brought with teacher approval on "Show AND Tell" days.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

We are grateful for all the friends and family of VCES who choose to volunteer in many different capacities. All visitors and volunteers must enter the main doors at the elementary school and sign in at the front office. Please wear your name badge and lanyard for the safety of the students. Once finished with the visit, please check out and return the lanyard. Please kindly refrain from dropping into a classroom or playground unannounced. All drop-offs of books and lunches should be done in the foyer cubbies at the entrance of the school.

LOST AND FOUND

Please label your child's coats, jackets, sweaters, winter hats, etc. so that they can be easily identified and returned to the owner. Unlabeled clothes and items left on the playground and around the school will be placed in the lost and found. Lost items will be displayed at the end of each quarter. Those not claimed will be donated to charity.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual student and class pictures are taken during the school year. Parents will be informed about the pictures through the event calendar, flyers and email. Students will be provided order forms or web-links for photos prior to Picture Day(s).

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

A school supply list will be emailed and available on the school website. Supply Kits for Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten will be ordered by the school for families to purchase.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Faith, wisdom, and service are our primary goals, but we also desire to instill tradition and provide our students with an enjoyable, community atmosphere. See the School Event Calendar and the weekly Life on the Hill e-newsletters for up to date information. We have several traditional events that define the tight-knit relationship between our students, their families, and our faculty. Some of our events, dependent on parent volunteers, have included:

- Western BBQ
- Gingerbread Social
- Father/Daughter Dance
- Father/Son Adventure
- Field Day
- Fun Run

SPRING EXPOSITION OF LEARNING - The "EXPO"

This "Open House" style event is a showcase of our students' learning for parents, friends, and community members to visit campus and see student work on display.

STUDENT BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special days for our students. A special treat may be sent in for the class if you make arrangements with the teacher ahead of time. A child with a summer birthday may celebrate their birthday with a special treat at a time mutually decided upon between the teacher and parent. (Nut-free treats only.) A special lunch may be brought for your student on this day.

DISCLAIMER

Nothing in this Student Handbook should be misconstrued as a contract. Any contractual rights are set forth in the Parent/Student Contract. Valley Christian reserves the right to add, delete, or modify any policy in this Student Handbook at any time with the support of the Schools Committee and Deacon Board.

PARENTAL SUPPORT AND COOPERATION

It is our expectation that parents and students will support and cooperate with the faculty and administrative staff of our schools. Our schools are structured and administered to achieve the stated goals of the mission statement of the schools. If a student and/or parent is not in agreement with our goals, and finds themselves in substantial disagreement with the administration or teaching staff, we recommend that they seek a different environment to achieve the goals that are important to them. If in our estimation, it is apparent that a parent and/or student is in substantial disagreement with the administration of Valley Christian Schools, we will require them to remove their student(s) from our schools, and help with the transfer of the student to the school of choice as designated by the parent.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Valley Christian Schools admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.