

VALLEY FORGE BAPTIST ACADEMY
2025-2026 TEACHER HANDBOOK



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Section 1-Introduction

1.1-School Mission and Philosophy

A. Mission Statement

Valley Forge Baptist Academy exists to provide an academically excellent environment that produces students with a Biblical worldview and encourages them to confidently engage the culture to make an impact for Christ.

B. Philosophy of Christian Education

i. Church-School Relationship

Valley Forge Baptist Academy is vital and necessary ministry of Valley Forge Baptist Temple. Since our church and academy are one and the same, we espouse the same doctrinal positions for both. These positions are defined in our church's declaration of faith, stated on the church and school website, and are enunciated regularly from our pulpit.

ii. A God-Centered View

God authored all truth, and we are bound to teach from His point of view according to His purpose. Thus, in every subject and activity, the student is brought into contact with God to help instill and reaffirm God-consciousness at all times.

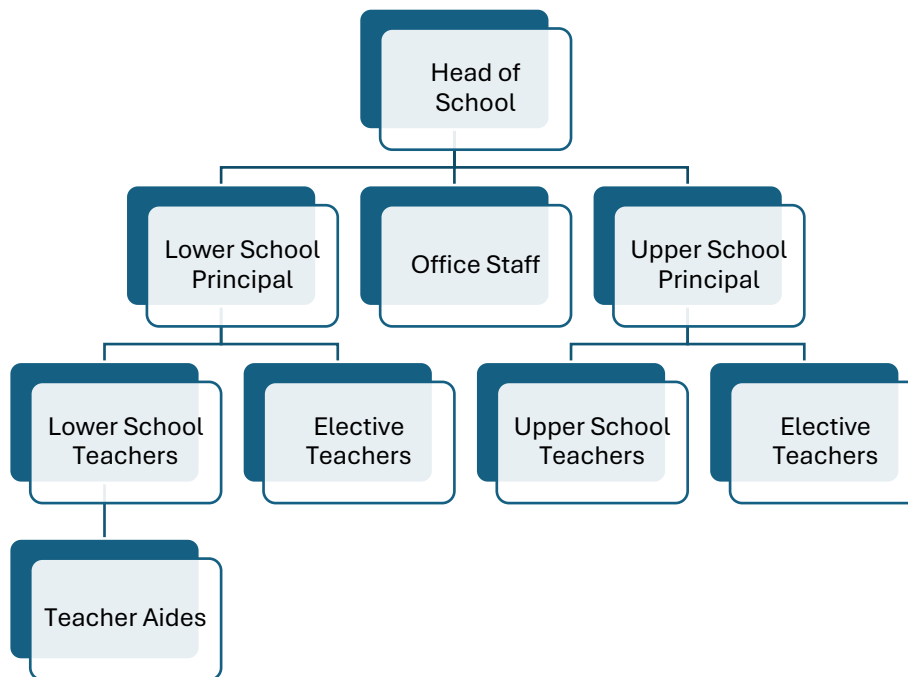
iii. A Program of Bible Study

The Bible is God's written Word to mankind. It is through the Bible that we know God, receive direction for the way to heaven, know how to be right with God, and receive instruction for everyday living. Because this knowledge of truth forms a foundation for the rest of our lives, the Bible is highly emphasized at VFBA, enhancing and undergirding the study of every other subject. Every student will be taught the Bible daily. In every grade level, students will be expected to read (or be read) the Bible and regularly memorize Bible passages.

iv. A Christian Staff

Every staff member at the Valley Forge Baptist Academy has publicly professed his/her faith and trust in Jesus Christ as his/her personal Lord and Savior and are active members of Valley Forge Baptist Temple. Every teacher is held to a high standard of moral integrity and expected to exude Godly qualities at all times as spiritual examples for our students.

Section 1.2- School Organization Chart and Important Contact Information



Important Contact Information

Airic Briggs- (727) 280-7921

Ashley Martin-(610) 420-1574

Mark Sherwin-(708) 821-3781

ChildLine (reporting child abuse) 1-800-932-0313

Police (non-emergency) -(610) 933-7899

Fire Department (non-emergency) -(610) 933-9179

Section 1.3-General Policies

A. Code of Ethics

- Please be aware of situations where you may find yourself alone with a student. A teacher should never be alone with a small group of students or another teacher of the opposite sex – if this occurs, please move to a public area with the doors open. The upstairs classrooms are considered public during the school day and perhaps after the school day if other teachers are still in their classrooms (however, the science lab is not a public area). Other areas not considered public are the playground/playland and the soccer field area. Failure to immediately move to a public area will result in administrative leave, suspension, or termination.
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B. Acceptable Use of Technology

Social Media

- Inappropriate or excessive texting will result in suspension or loss of teaching position.
- Facetimeing, instant messaging, texting, snap chatting or Facebook messaging, or any other personal social media *private* contact with a student of the opposite sex is inappropriate. If you doubt the guideline does not seem straightforward, it is your responsibility to ask the administration. Acting as if you did not understand the rules or pleading ignorance will result in suspension or loss of your teaching position.
- All posts must reflect the academy standards (music posts, movies, etc.) Please be careful what you post.
- Please do not use your smartphone or computer during the day to upload pictures, tweet, or like things during work hours.
- If you put a picture of your class on Facebook or other social media, please do not tag students or use student's last names.

C. Inclement Weather

- If any weather emergency necessitates the closing of school, the teachers will receive a message on Slack as soon as possible and be informed of the situation.
- If road conditions delay you from getting to school on time, call the school office as soon as possible.
- Weather and school closing will be announced on the following radio and television stations: KYW AM1060 Montgomery C. School # 397; Channel 3,6,10 – the school's name will scroll across the bottom of the screen.
- We always follow Spring-ford School District procedures. Montgomery. Co. School #308 on KYW1060.

D. Safety and Security

Fire Alarm

- Teachers should quickly grab their walkie-talkie, phone, & clipboard with the class roster.
 - The person closest to the door should lead out of the building.
 - Move quickly and quietly in a single file line—no running or talking.
 - Students are not to touch other students around them.
 - The first person through the outside door must hold the door until the last person is evacuated.
 - All doors and windows should be shut, and lights turned off.
 - Students in areas of the building other than the classroom must evacuate through the nearest exit. If a student happens to be alone in the building when the alarm sounds, they are to exit with the nearest class and inform the teacher.
 - Teachers must take attendance and report the attendance via walkie-talkie and Slack to the Administrator.
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- Teachers are responsible for the behavior of the class during the drill.

Intruder

- Teachers should quickly grab their walkie-talkie, phone, & clipboard with the class roster.
- All doors and windows should be shut, and lights turned off.
- Students in areas of the building other than the classroom must evacuate through the nearest exit. If a student happens to be alone in the building when the alarm sounds, they are to exit with the nearest class and inform the teacher.
- Teachers must take attendance and report the attendance via Slack.
- Teachers are responsible for the behavior of the class during the drill.

Injuries

- All serious injuries are to be sent to the office (after the following procedure is followed).
- If a severe injury occurs, the injured student should be kept still until the seriousness of the injury has been determined.
- All other students should be kept away from injured students.
- If assistance is needed, please use the walkie-talkie to radio the office. The walkie-talkies can be used as a phone to call 911 if needed.
- All accidents must be reported using Incident Forms and filed in the office. The office and/or administration are responsible for contacting parents.

Sickness at School

- If a child becomes seriously ill during your class, please send him to the office – do not email or text the parents. If a child experiences minor illness during your class, please check if they are hungry/thirsty or just need to rest first before automatically sending them, as a visit to the office should be a last resort.
- The school office will determine whether the illness is sufficient to warrant calling the parents.
- Under no circumstances should a student be allowed to take medication of any kind, including aspirin, unless a doctor prescribes it, it is in a prescription container, or a parent has sent in a note.
- All medication must be kept in the academy office and administered by designated school officials.
- You will receive a list of the children in your class who have problems resulting in a medical emergency. This list must not be posted, but it should be kept in the back of your lesson plan book or teacher notebook. This list should be accessible and given to every substitute teacher that you have filling in for you (art, music & gym teachers will be informed as well).
- You will also be given a red emergency binder that will list contact info for students—this binder should always be taken on field trips.

Visitors

- All visitors (children/adults) should be cleared with the academy office before observing, presenting a talk, etc. Any person who comes in to talk to the school must be dressed modestly. All visitors must register in the Academy office before going to a classroom.
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Section 2-Teacher Duties

2.1-Teacher Attendance

- Teachers need to be at school by 7:30 AM. The workday ends at 3:30 PM.
- Teachers should be in the building during those times unless they receive prior permission from the administration.
- Please do not leave campus throughout the day to pick up coffee etc., unless you are running out during your lunch break. If you do not have a class, you are being paid to prepare for a class. Please notify the office should you leave campus.
- Please note that Parent/Teacher Conferences are on the calendar (usually scheduled about a month after school starts).

2.2-Teacher Dress Code

- Men's hair should be above the ears, off the collar, and distinctly professional in nature. Faddish or extreme hairstyles are not permitted.
- Men's dress should be professional and appropriate, including a button-down shirt and business casual pants. Shirts should be tucked in.
- Women's dress should be professional and appropriate with skirts and dresses going to the top of the knee when sitting or standing. Dress slacks should be loose-fitting and business casual/professional. Cargo pants, yoga pants, jeans, and leggings are not appropriate.
- Business casual shoes are appropriate for both men and women.
- Fridays are theme shirt/patriot wear days which includes patriot pants and jeans.

2.3-Daily Duties

General Responsibilities

- Each teacher is expected to be in good health and to report to the administration any illness which affects his performance as a teacher. This includes mental health conditions as well.
- Teachers are to arrive at school early enough to prepare for the day and be in their classroom or designated area for devotions/prayer time by 7:30 AM.
- Teachers are responsible for the supervision of students at all times. This is a legal responsibility. No student should be left unsupervised in any room. Supervision extends to all parts of the building. Each teacher is responsible for discipline when misbehavior is observed at any level. We are responsible for those under our care. We must supervise students and their well-being. Injury may occur when we do not supervise or control the setting in a proper manner. When an injury is caused or perceived to be caused by a lack of duty, we can be held accountable.

Dismissal

- Each elementary teacher is responsible for taking their class to the dismissal locations by 2:55 PM. The doors open for dismissal at 3:00pm.
- The teacher on car or bus duty must stay with the children until all the students have left. All students that have not been picked up by 3:10 pm should be taken to the Academy Office. Students may not wait outside the school building alone.

Recess

- The office is responsible for determining whether recess is indoors or outdoors. Inclement weather or severe weather is the only reason for having an indoor recess. If the temperature or wind chill is below 32 degrees, please stay indoors.
- A walkie-talkie must be used for a recess (whether outside or in the FLC).
- During outdoor recess, the duty teacher is responsible for seeing that children are playing peaceably.
- The duty teacher is not to play with the students at recess as that distracts from the primary responsibilities of the duty teacher. Exception: All the students are involved in the game, e.g., kickball. A teacher may organize games for the children to play if the other children are being watched.
- For any injuries, the teacher on duty must complete an incident report and turn it into the academy office. The academy office must contact the parent if there is an injury.
- When the teacher calls the students at the end of recess, all students should come and line up in their designated spot. At that time, all communication should cease.
- Please use discretion as to where the students are to play. If the ground is wet, play in the Family Life Center. If the FLC is in use, the students should play in the classrooms. You must be able to always see all students.

Lesson Plans

- Lesson plans are due in Atlas by Monday for the next week.
- Lesson plans should include the following:
 - Time schedules.
 - Subjects being taught.
 - Titles of books being used, and the page numbers being used that day
 - Seatwork is required for each day (unless this is noted on a separate sheet of paper or the chalkboard).
 - Visuals being used in the lesson.
- Please make sure your lesson plans can be easily followed by the substitute.

Elementary Hallways

- Elementary students will walk down the hall in straight lines. Whenever possible, stay to the right of the hallway.
 - The elementary teacher should walk toward the back of the line and over to the side to observe the students.
 - Elementary students should stop at corners and ends of hallways as designated by the teacher.
 - Elementary students should always be quiet when walking in the hall or when waiting in line.
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2.4-Special Events

Calendar

- The Master Calendar is available in *CONNECT* and Tandem. Please notify the school office if you need assistance to view the calendar. The administration must approve all school and class functions before being added to the digital calendar. Failure to follow these procedures can result in the activity being canceled.

Field Trips

- Field trips are to be an educational experience not available in the classroom.
- A Field Trip Request Form must be completed and approved 2 months before booking any tickets or signing any contracts. The forms are in your teacher's notebook. Additional ones are available in the office.
- Field trips are not to be scheduled to Philadelphia on Fridays.
- Once approved, an email or letter should be sent to the parents informing them of the trip destination and the total cost of the trip (elementary field trip costs are included in the Student Life fee—only chaperones would need to pay). The email or letter should be sent no later than two weeks before the actual date of the field trip.
- The academy office will reserve required vehicles, but it is your responsibility to secure a bus driver. Once the bus driver has been secured, please notify the office, which will update the church office.
- Be sure to inform the parents of the cost of the field trip and any pertinent details for the day (dress, lunch, departure, and arrival times, etc.).
- Ensure that you have enough chaperones for the trip so that each child is adequately supervised.
- All chaperones must submit all necessary background checks to participate in any field trips before going. There is no exception! This is the law, not a VFBT rule. If your parents do not have the required background checks, they cannot go. It is your responsibility to make sure that they have.
- The dress code may be altered for a field trip when deemed necessary by the teacher/administration. Please make sure that the parents who are chaperoning know the dress code for parents (knee-length skirts, loose fitting pants or jeans for women; neat pants or jeans for men).
- Teachers/coaches etc., are not to plan overnight parties or take students to see a movie.

Chapel

- Chapel will be held on Fridays.
 - All full-time teachers are required to be in the chapel unless given prior approval to miss.
 - All students must have a Bible for chapel. High School students are to be issued demerits for not bringing their Bible to the chapel. Demerits should still be issued to those who "*obtain*" a Bible from the Lost & Found.
 - If an invitation is given, watch for children who respond and deal with them privately if needed after chapel.
 - Avoid social media, texting, or emailing during chapel time.
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Christian Service Projects (Elementary)

To help children put their faith into practice, each teacher should plan to have their class participate in at least one Christian service project a year. Some suggestions are as follows:

- Write to missionaries.
- Establish missionary children pen pals.
- Visit a nursing home and present a program.
- Collect canned goods for a needy family.
- Collect toys for a children's home or needy family at Christmas.

2.5-Student Records

A. Attendance and Tardiness

- Attendance should be taken by 8:15 AM. Please note all absent and tardy students.
- **Elementary teachers**, please direct any emails about dismissal to the office.
- **High School teachers**, 8:00AM begins your Homeroom. It is at this time that attendance and lunch orders are taken. You will also determine that each of your students is in dress code. If there is an infraction (skirt length, not shaven, wrong shoes, wrong shirt, etc.), issue a demerit to the student. If it is an infraction due to modesty, send the student to the office to address the issue. Faithfully overseeing the dress code is a part of your role as the homeroom teacher. It is necessary that you understand the importance of holding each student accountable to the dress guidelines. All students should leave 1st period dressed appropriately.
- If a student is late to class because you detained them, it is your responsibility to issue them a Hall Pass or notify their teacher of their next class. Please do not send them to the Academy Office for a pass. The Office will only issue a Hall Pass for students who arrive late due to bussing, appointments, or detained by the office or the Administrator. If the student arrives at your class without a pass, they are to be marked unexcused tardy, and then tardiness penalties will apply. A supply of hall passes has been placed in your Teacher Notebook. When you run out, please notify the office.

B. Gradebook and Grading Procedures

Pre-K and Kindergarten Report Cards

O=Above average
S, S+=Average
S-=Below Average
U=Unsatisfactory
N=Needs Improvement

1st-12th grade Report Cards

All subjects are recorded with a numeric grade. The percentile equivalents are as follows:

A+	97-100
A	93-96
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	0-59

General Grading Policies

- Grades should be kept in FACTS SIS (or print a copy of your grades from FACTS SIS).
- All tests, quizzes, and homework should be graded promptly and returned to the students within 48 business hours.
- Do not allow students to grade their tests or another student's tests.
- Students may grade other types of their work if they desire to see how they are progressing.
- You are to contact the families and copy administration for students with consistent Ds and Fs and may fail your class.
- If an academically sound student begins to drop drastically in any subject, a notice should be sent home immediately.

Testing

- Tests should be an evaluation of both what the student learned and how well the information was taught. If many students fail a test in your class, you need to evaluate how well you taught the information. It may be that you will have to do some re-teaching and give a re-test, at the minimum.
 - Tests should cover information that has been taught and reviewed. This would include such things as Chapter Check-Ups and Chapter Reviews. A student can't adequately know how they will do on a test if you don't give corrected work on a Chapter Check-Up or Chapter Review assignment. New concepts should have adequate reinforcement before they are included in a test.
 - Tests should include a variety of questions. Some of these may be multiple choice, matching, true and false, short answers, fill in the blank, and essay.
 - Be sure to gear the test to the age level of the class. Younger children may know the information but not be able to perform the skill required on the test.
 - Do not expect children to learn the material for tests on their own. Your responsibility is to teach the material and review it sufficiently so they will not have to spend an undo
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amount of time studying. Younger children will spend less time studying outside of the class than older children.

- Generally, for grades 1-9th, no more than 2 tests a day. 3 tests can be given for 10th-12th grade; however, only two tests for 11th-12th grade on Thursday. A minimum of 5 days' notice must be given for the tests.

Standardized Tests

- Standardized tests are given throughout the school year.
- As a classroom teacher, you are expected to:
- Administer the test to your class.
 - Follow directions very carefully as you give the test.
 - Confirm Roster.
 - Reserve Technology.
 - Complete testing within testing window.

Homework

- Family life and time for play are part of every elementary child's life. They spend 7 hours in school each day. When giving homework, we must remember to take the time factor into consideration. Remember that study time is required for tests, Bible verses, etc. If a lot of studying is required, then there should be very little written homework. If the average student is overloaded, then you are giving too much work. Work not completed in school and sent home with slower children can also be a burden. You need to communicate with the parents of these children to see if this work is too much.
- The average time for homework should be no more than 10 minutes a night per grade. (4th grade would be 40 minutes). This formula includes study times for quizzes. Additional study time may be needed for tests. Remember, you are not the only teacher your student has.
- Giving homework due on Thursday (for grades 1-6) is not permitted because of evening church. For Jr. and Sr. High students, homework can be given on Wednesday, but the homework due date would be Friday. If you do this, do not give additional homework on Thursday, which is also due on Friday. DO NOT give tests on Thursday.
- Give no homework on nights when your students are involved in programs. Please do not make a project due on the day after the students have been involved in a program.
- Homework should not be given because you did not have time to teach the material in class. Homework should be given to reinforce the concepts already taught in class that day or to prepare students for the next day's class.
- Long-term projects or papers must be accompanied by sufficient instructions (a rubric should be given each time), with a timetable for the various stages of its completion. Please be sure that the timetable is suitable for the grade level.
- Homework assignments should be completed on time. If they are not, the grade should be lowered (20% off per day). Be sure to mark missing assignments in FACTS so parents are alerted.

Instructional Procedures

- Notebooks: K-5th grade students are required to have an assignment notebook to record homework. The notebook should be signed nightly by the parents to be sure they are aware of the student's assignments. Teachers should also sign it each day.
- The following skills and habits can all be learned if the teacher takes the initiative and responsibility to see that these are taught/learned. They are as important as the actual subject matter:
 - How to study
 - How to prepare assignments
 - How to review and prepare for tests
- Teachers are encouraged to use resources other than the single textbook approach to achieve their goals.
- All major topics or skills of any assigned course must be covered during the year. It is the teacher's responsibility to budget their time to accomplish this task.
- Do not consider all textbook chapters of equal importance; be selective.
- Although all textbooks in current use have been screened for their educational value, care should be taken that the school's Christian philosophy becomes the mode of interpretation. Watch for the humanistic view, which is often found in secular textbooks and other books to supplement the curriculum.

Progress Reports

- Progress reports for the 1st-12th grade will be sent home electronically approximately 4-1/2 weeks into the quarter.
- Grades should be recorded as a percentile, not as a letter grade.
- If the end of a quarter is on a Friday, grades are due by the following Monday at 3:00pm.
- Be sure to have enough grades in your grade book to substantiate the grades you give each marking period. (Example: An A student should not have a B in reading because they did poorly on one quiz, and you didn't have enough quizzes for that student to bring up his grade). A good rule of thumb is to have one grade per week for each subject.
- Electives should have a minimum of three grades in a marking period.

Upper School Gradebook Weighting

- 50% tests, 30% quizzes, 20% homework, or 45% tests, 35% quizzes, 20% homework
- Teachers may seek approval from the Administrator to use alternative weighting. Any change from this scale must be designed to benefit the student's grades.
- 9th-12th midterm and final exams should account for 10% of final grade.
- 6th-8th midterm and final exams should account for 5% of final grade.

Lower School Grading

- Grades should represent a child's knowledge and performance in each subject in the Curriculum. Therefore, when grading a paper or test in a particular subject, the grade should be determined by the proficiency displayed in that subject. For example, poor spelling on a creative writing paper can lower the grade in language. It should be a smaller percentage of the grade than the content of the paper. Another option is to give two grades on the paper: one for language and one for spelling. Poor handwriting should not lower the grade in any subject except penmanship and spelling. You may ask that the student rewrite a paper if it is not legible. If a word is unreadable on a
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spelling test, it is considered wrong. You may take points off if returning the paper means the paper will be turned in late.

C. Report Cards

- Students' cumulative folders are in the school office. Teachers must ask to get these from the office. Folders MUST be returned to the school office the same day. These records are confidential and should be treated as such. Do not show them to anyone except the parents. They are never to be taken off the school premises.
- Cumulative folders contain students' report cards, test scores, IEPs, VF Student Plans, etc. Teachers will be held responsible for knowing the basic educational facts of the students. Teachers should know their students' activities and scores in reading comprehension and math skills and their other areas of strengths and weaknesses.
- Please review your students' final report cards and IOWA/CogAt results from the previous year, as well as their VF Student Plans (if applicable), at the beginning of the year.

D. Academic Policies

Prioritize your Curriculum into 3 categories:

- Core information/Must have – material to be covered thoroughly.
- Discretionary information/nice to have – if time allows.
- Additional information – for advanced students.
- Extra credit – for students who work hard but have low grades

Unexcused Absences or Tardies

- 20% off penalty will be given for every day that work is turned in later than the originally assigned due date. Teachers should coordinate with students who are absent from tests and quizzes. Work needs to be turned in by the end of the second day after returning to school. No credit will be given for late work beyond five school days.
- Students who use pre-planned absences will be required to make up any previously communicated test/quizzes when they return.
- Excessive absences will be handled in conjunction with Administration on an individual basis.

2.6-Student Discipline

Discipline

- Teachers who notice students having consistent problems in academic areas or behavior are to notify the Administration promptly. Don't let the situation escalate to a point where severe actions must be taken.
 - The Scriptures teach us that to have friends, we must be friendly. A warm, friendly spirit should prevail to help each pupil do their best. Sarcasm, ridicule, and showing disgust should not be a part of the teacher-pupil relationship. There is no place for outbursts of anger. Outbursts of anger show a loss of self-control.
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- Students should be expected to respond to those in authority with respect both verbally and by their actions. If we expect the students to treat us with respect, we must, in turn, treat them with respect.
- Children do not learn good behavior chiefly by being punished for their misconduct (Luke 6:40; 2 Tim. 3:16). They learn by example, instruction, practice, and their own mistakes. Good discipline is training, not necessarily punishment.
- Teachers should speak to children in a controlled tone of voice. Yelling should not be used as a means of class control or correction. A pleasant tone of voice should be used when instructing children.
- Enhance your disciplinary posture by being organized and confident, using body language, and by your physical presence and positive statements that reinforce.
- Do not discipline children in front of the class. Remove them to a private place to discuss their misbehavior.
- Do not use mass discipline when there are only a few offenders in the group.
- Do not use unorthodox methods of discipline.
- Do not use deprivation of Music, Art, Gym, Computer class, or Library as a means of general punishment. They are a part of the curriculum. If a child continually misbehaves in one of these classes, they may lose the privilege of attending the class.
- Always try to discern the underlying cause of the behavior and deal with the root of the problem, not just the action.
- If a child is under your jurisdiction (recess, lunch, etc.) and you feel he needs to be disciplined, please consult his classroom teacher first. *If the child needs to be separated from the group, you may seat them at a separate table or have them sit out of recess for some time.
- Use Scriptural principles when dealing with discipline problems. Refer to verses that deal with the area of the offense.
- After discipline is administered, the relationship between the teacher and the pupil should be restored. The purpose of discipline is to build relationships, not to destroy them.

Teacher causes of misbehavior:

- Uninteresting learning situations
- Improper academic pacing
- Lack of variety of teaching methods
- Lack of classroom organization
- Lack of preparation
- Lack of security or self-respect
- Improper supervision of the class
- Inappropriate activity or method for the developmental level of the age group

Pupil causes of misbehavior

- Feeling of inadequacy
 - Desire for attention
 - Desire for revenge
 - Academic frustration
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- Emotional problems
- Boredom (lack of challenging material)
- Developmental maturity factors

Corrective Suggestions

- Unkind actions – have the child do a certain number of kind things for the person they have offended.
- Unkind words – have them write a letter to the person they have offended. They should ask for forgiveness and list several promising characteristics of the person.
- Unfair or rough play – suspend them from playing that particular game for a day or several days. Do not allow them to play with the individual with whom they are having the problem.
- Mischief in the bathroom – have them clean the bathroom at recess (possibly several days in a row). The teacher will need to supervise. (with approval from the administration).
- Falling off the chair or not staying seated – have the child stand at the back of their desk to do their work. Take their chair away.
- Constant talking or inattentiveness – move the child to an empty desk away from the other children.
- Disruptive behavior – remove the student from the room or the situation.
- Stealing – the child should return what was stolen or work to earn money to pay for the stolen item. Parents and administration must be notified.
- Cheating- the student who gave or took an answer will receive an "F" on the paper, or they can retake the test and average the two tests together.
- Wasting class time – take some of the student's recess time away.

General Discipline Guidelines

Calling or writing parents – Keep parents informed concerning behavior problems. Sometimes no other action is necessary. Send home a warning notice before taking more severe action. Refer to the student handbook for discipline procedures. For lying, cheating, hurting someone on purpose, or direct defiance of a teacher, the student must be sent immediately to the office.

Administering Discipline

- Always counsel a student before you administer any form of discipline.
 - Ask the child to tell you what they did wrong.
 - Relate the wrongdoing to a Biblical principle or show the child verses about the wrongdoing. If possible, have the child read the verses to you.
 - Explain that God chastises sin, and we must follow God's principles.
 - Remind them that even though God hates sin, He still loves them, and we do too.
 - Remind them that God will forgive them for their sin if they ask Him to and that we will forgive them also.
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- If it involves another person or persons, the offender should ask forgiveness of the offended party or parties. No child should be forced to ask forgiveness, but he should be encouraged to do so.
- The child should pray and ask God for forgiveness. Consider that if the child is not responding, they may not be saved or maybe out of fellowship with God. Such a child may need to be dealt with concerning salvation or getting right with God. If you don't feel the child is in the right mind to pray, you should pray with him.
- Discipline should not be administered unless you have sufficient proof that the child committed the offense. If two witnesses tell the same story when questioned privately, you may want to consider the accuracy of a reported action. Do not punish a child who cannot be proven guilty. When in doubt, refer the situation to the administrator/principal.
- Students can contest their discipline.
 - If an elementary student feels the demerit was unfairly given, he should not argue or let his unhappiness show in any way. He should talk privately at a convenient time to the person who gave him the demerit. If that person agrees with him, the demerit may be withdrawn. If that person does not agree, the demerit should be accepted graciously. Students should never argue with a teacher and are expected to always exhibit courtesy and respect. This is important for students to learn at a young age.
 - If a high school student disagrees with a demerit, he can fill out a "Demerit Appeal" form in the office. The form will be reviewed by administration and a final decision will be made.

Lower School Discipline

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Positive Reinforcement

- It is just as important to have a system that provides positive reinforcement as well, rather than just focusing on negative behavior.
- Teachers should have a system set up in class (i.e. rewarding behavior either individually or as a class on a daily or consistent basis).
- Behavior charts can be useful as well so the students can see how they are doing.
- If a certain student is in need of closer monitoring, behavioral contracts can be implemented as well.

Rewards

- Children need positive reinforcement for good behavior, effort, improvement, etc. The following methods may be employed:
 - Verbal praise
 - Body language (pat on back, a smile, a nod)
 - Certificate or note sent home
 - Small prizes (please use sparingly and with discretion)
 - Praise note or call to parents
 - Note to the child
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Section 3-Absences

3.1-Personal/Sick Days

- Teachers will receive a maximum of 5 paid sick/personal days per year. These days cannot accumulate from year to year.
- The cost of a substitute teacher will be deducted from the teacher's pay after all the sick/personal days have been utilized.
- No more than 2 teachers in each school (Lower/Upper) may take a personal day at a time.
- Personal days cannot be used the day before or after a scheduled school break.
- If you do not use your sick/personal days, you will be given \$50.00 per day for each day you do not use.

3.2- Bereavement

- You will receive a bereavement day for a family funeral.
- Exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the administration.

3.3- Substitutes

- If you are unable to teach due to sickness, it is your responsibility to find a substitute and notify your principal. Please email the administrative assistant so an accurate record of your attendance can be recorded.
 - Should you need to request a day off, you must submit a substitute form to the office. (One has been provided in your Teacher Notebook.) Once your request has been approved, you will get the form returned in your box.
 - The teacher should have a class list in the substitute folder and on the clipboard hanging by your classroom door.
 - The teacher shall prepare a substitute folder containing the following (keep this updated):
 - Daily schedule
 - Seating chart
 - Duty sheet
 - Basic classroom rules
 - Class leaders
 - List of any reading groups or math groups
 - One day's lesson plans, different from the plan in the lesson plan book
 - Extra work pages (three to four different types)
 - List of substitute responsibilities (lunch duty, recess, etc.)
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Section 4-Teacher Observation and Evaluation

VFBA is committed to shaping a teacher's evolution in positive, meaningful ways, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction and student achievement. The teacher observation and evaluation schedule advances that commitment through three observation and evaluation methods: informal walkthroughs, classroom observations, and final evaluations.

4.1-Informal Walkthroughs

- Purpose: identify patterns and trends in the school and to inform areas of strength and possible professional development needs. Provides the administrative team with a snapshot of each classroom.
- Frequency: Will happen on a regular and rotating basis for 10-15 minutes.
- Walkthrough may focus on a particular school wide goal or may focus on an area of need that the teacher has identified.
- Feedback is given through shared observation notes and reflective questions. Teachers may follow up with the observer if desired.

4.2-Classroom Observations

- Purpose: To get a larger picture of a whole lesson, class engagement, best practices
- Frequency: Classroom observations are whole class period observations (~45 min). New teachers are observed twice a year (fall and spring) while returning teachers are observed in the spring. Additional observations can be requested by the teacher or administrative team.
- Process: Administrative team sets the observation window, and teachers select a day and class period to be observed. Prior to the observation, the teacher and the observer meet to allow time for the teacher to talk about the components and complexities of the classroom. Feedback from the observation is given through the Danielson rubric. After the observation, teachers schedule a post-observation conference to go over feedback.

4.3-Final Evaluation

- Purpose: To give an overall score for each domain of the Danielson rubric
 - Frequency: Once a year in the spring semester
 - The administrative team will use both informal walkthrough data and full observation data for overall score in each domain. Prior to evaluation the teacher will reflect on each domain, score themselves, and provide evidence for their scoring. The principals will meet with their respective teachers to discuss the ratings and share feedback on the scoring.
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Section 5-Teacher Disciplinary Procedures

5.1-Written Warnings and Performance Improvement Plans

Purpose

- This policy outlines the procedures for issuing written warnings and implementing Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) to address employee performance issues. The aim is to provide clear guidelines to ensure fair, consistent, and transparent handling of performance-related matters, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and support for employees.

Scope

- This policy applies to all employees, regardless of their role or level within the organization.

Definitions

- **Written Warning:** A formal notice issued to an employee identifying specific areas of underperformance and outlining expectations for improvement.
- **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP):** A structured plan designed to help an employee improve their performance over a specified period through specific goals, actions, and support mechanisms.

Procedures

- **Identifying Performance Issues**
 - Supervisors/Managers should regularly monitor and evaluate employee performance.
 - Performance issues should be documented, including specific examples and evidence of underperformance.
 - **Issuing a Written Warning**
 - If an employee's performance does not meet expectations despite informal feedback and coaching, a written warning may be issued.
 - The written warning should include:
 - A clear statement of the performance issues.
 - Specific examples and evidence.
 - Expected standards of performance.
 - A timeframe for improvement (typically 30 to 90 days).
 - Consequences of not meeting the performance expectations.
 - **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)**
 - If performance issues persist after a written warning, a PIP may be implemented.
 - The PIP should be developed collaboratively between the supervisor/manager and the employee.
 - The PIP must include:
 - Clear, measurable objectives.
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- Specific actions the employee needs to take.
 - Support and resources provided by the organization.
 - A timeframe for achieving the goals (typically 30 to 90 days).
 - Regular check-ins and feedback sessions.
 - Consequences of not meeting the PIP objectives.
- **Monitoring and Review**
 - Regular check-in meetings should be scheduled to discuss progress.
 - Progress should be documented and feedback provided to the employee.
 - Adjustments to the PIP may be made if necessary, based on the employee's progress and feedback.
 - **Conclusion of PIP**
 - At the end of the PIP period, a final review meeting should be held to assess the employee's performance.
 - If the employee meets the performance objectives, the PIP will be concluded, and the employee will be notified in writing.
 - If the employee does not meet the performance objectives, further actions may include an extension of the PIP, reassignment, or termination of employment.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Administrators**
 - Identify performance issues and document them.
 - Provide informal feedback and coaching.
 - Issue written warnings when necessary.
 - Develop and implement PIPs.
 - Monitor and support employee progress.
 - Maintain records of written warnings and PIPs.
- **Employees**
 - Acknowledge and understand performance issues.
 - Participate actively in the development and implementation of the PIP.
 - Strive to meet performance objectives and seek help when needed.

Confidentiality

- All documentation related to written warnings and PIPs should be kept confidential and shared only with those directly involved in the process.

Compliance

- Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
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5.2-Suspension and Administrative Leave

Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for the use of suspension and administrative leave to address various situations, including disciplinary actions, investigations, and other circumstances requiring an employee's temporary removal from their duties.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, regardless of their role or level within the organization.

Definitions

- **Suspension:** A temporary removal of an employee from their duties, typically without pay, as a disciplinary measure or pending the outcome of an investigation.
- **Administrative Leave:** A temporary removal of an employee from their duties, typically with pay, pending the resolution of an investigation or other administrative matters.

Procedures

- **Suspension**
 - **Grounds for Suspension**
 - Violation of company policies or procedures.
 - Misconduct or inappropriate behavior.
 - Poor performance that has not improved after prior interventions.
 - Pending investigation into allegations of serious misconduct.
 - **Suspension Process**
 - The administrator must document the reasons for considering suspension.
 - A meeting should be held with the employee to discuss the issues and provide an opportunity for the employee to respond.
 - If suspension is deemed necessary, a suspension notice must be prepared, including:
 - The reasons for the suspension.
 - The duration of the suspension.
 - Expectations during the suspension period (e.g., availability for meetings or investigations).
 - The next steps, including any investigation process.
 - **Duration of Suspension**
 - Suspension should be for a specified period, typically not exceeding 30 days.
 - Extensions may be granted in exceptional circumstances.
 - **Documentation and Records**
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- All documentation related to the suspension must be maintained in the employee's personnel file.
- The employee should receive a copy of the suspension notice.
- **Administrative Leave**
 - **Grounds for Administrative Leave**
 - Pending investigation into allegations of misconduct or other issues.
 - Situations where the presence of the employee may interfere with the investigation process.
 - Other administrative matters requiring the employee's temporary removal from duties.
 - **Administrative Leave Process**
 - The administrator must document the reasons for considering administrative leave.
 - An administrative leave notice must be prepared, including:
 - The reasons for the administrative leave.
 - The expected duration of the leave.
 - Expectations during the leave period (e.g., availability for meetings or investigations).
 - The next steps, including any investigation process.
 - **Duration of Administrative Leave**
 - Administrative leave should be for a specified period, typically not exceeding 30 days.
 - Extensions may be granted in exceptional circumstances.
 - **Pay and Benefits During Administrative Leave**
 - Employees on administrative leave will typically receive their regular pay and benefits.
 - Any deviations from this must be clearly communicated to the employee and documented.
 - **Documentation and Records**
 - All documentation related to the administrative leave must be maintained in the employee's personnel file.
 - The employee should receive a copy of the administrative leave notice.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Administration**
 - Identify and document situations warranting suspension or administrative leave.
 - Consult with Pastor before implementing suspension or administrative leave.
 - Communicate the decision and expectations clearly to the employee.
 - Maintain records of suspensions and administrative leaves.
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- **Employees**
 - Comply with the terms of their suspension or administrative leave.
 - Remain available for meetings or investigations as required.

Confidentiality

All documentation and information related to suspension and administrative leave should be kept confidential and shared only with those directly involved in the process.

Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

5.3-Termination

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for the termination of employment to ensure a fair, consistent, and legally compliant approach to ending employment relationships within the organization.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, regardless of their role or level within the organization.

Definitions

- **Termination:** The ending of an employee's employment with the organization, which can be voluntary (resignation) or involuntary (dismissal).
- **Voluntary Termination:** When an employee resigns from their position.
- **Involuntary Termination:** When the organization terminates an employee's employment for reasons such as performance issues, misconduct, redundancy, or other organizational needs.

Procedures

- **Voluntary Termination (Resignation)**
 - **Notice Period**
 - Employees are expected to provide written notice of their resignation.
 - The standard notice period is two weeks, unless otherwise specified in the employee's contract.
 - **Resignation Process**
 - The employee should submit a resignation letter to their immediate supervisor.
 - The supervisor should acknowledge receipt of the resignation in writing.
 - Administration will schedule an exit interview to understand the employee's reasons for leaving and gather feedback.
 - **Final Pay and Benefits**
 - The employee will receive their final paycheck on the next scheduled payday, including payment for any accrued but unused vacation days.
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- Administration will provide information on the continuation of benefits, if applicable.
 - **Involuntary Termination (Dismissal)**
 - **Grounds for Involuntary Termination**
 - Performance issues that have not improved despite prior interventions.
 - Misconduct or violation of company policies.
 - Redundancy due to organizational restructuring or downsizing.
 - Other reasons as deemed appropriate by the organization.
 - **Performance-Based Termination**
 - Document performance issues and prior interventions (e.g., performance improvement plans).
 - Hold a meeting with the employee to discuss ongoing performance issues and the decision to terminate.
 - Provide the employee with a termination letter outlining the reasons for dismissal and the effective date.
 - **Misconduct-Based Termination**
 - Conduct a thorough investigation into the alleged misconduct.
 - Document findings and consult with legal counsel as necessary.
 - Hold a disciplinary meeting with the employee to present findings and allow the employee to respond.
 - If termination is warranted, provide the employee with a termination letter outlining the reasons for dismissal and the effective date.
 - **Redundancy-Based Termination**
 - Identify the roles/positions affected by redundancy.
 - Provide notice to the affected employees as per legal requirements and company policy.
 - Offer support, such as outplacement services, where possible.
 - Provide the employee with a termination letter outlining the reasons for redundancy and the effective date.
 - **Immediate Termination**
 - In cases of severe misconduct (e.g., violence, theft), immediate termination may be necessary.
 - Document the reasons for immediate termination.
 - Provide the employee with a termination letter outlining the reasons and the effective date.
 - **Final Pay and Benefits**
 - The employee will receive their final paycheck on the next scheduled payday, including payment for any accrued but unused vacation days.
 - The administrator will provide information on the continuation of benefits, if applicable.
 - **Exit Procedures**
 - Retrieve company property (e.g., keys, laptops, ID badges).
 - Conduct an exit interview to gather feedback.
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- Remove the employee's access to company systems and premises.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Administrators**

- Document performance issues and prior interventions.
- Conduct meetings and communicate decisions regarding termination.
- Ensure company property is returned.
- Conduct exit interviews and process final pay and benefits.

- **Employees**

- Provide written notice of resignation, if applicable.
- Return all company property.
- Participate in the exit interview process.

Confidentiality

All documentation and information related to termination should be kept confidential and shared only with those directly involved in the process.

Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Section 6-Miscellaneous

Elementary Restroom Policies

- Take your class to the restroom as a group at least two times a day.
- Children may go individually when it is necessary.
- Inspect the bathrooms before and after your class uses them. Please check for running water, unflushed toilets, and paper on the floor. (Maybe that could be a class job for one of your students.)
- Students may have water bottles in the classroom if they are not a disruption.
- If it is an emergency, children may come in from the playground to use the restrooms. The children must get permission from the recess teacher.
- The children should be permitted to get drinks at the water fountain when they go to the restroom with the class.

Supplies

- Office supplies – please get these supplies from the teacher's workroom cabinet. If the needed supply is not available, please write it down on the list posted inside the workroom cabinet and notify the school office. Also, if you need different types and quantities of paper that are not usual, please inform the school office.
 - Classroom supplies/budget – Each teacher is allotted \$250 per year to be used on classroom décor or party allowance.
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