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GRACE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
est. 1980

PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

2022-2023

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A DIVISION OF GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

Member of the Association of Christian Schools International

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Welcome

Thank you for partnering with Grace Christian School in your child's educational journey. We continue to work hard to make GCS a place in which students have the opportunity to be successful in a loving and Christ-centred environment.

GCS is a vibrant, private/Christian co-educational school in Charlottetown (PEI), offering a dynamic 21st-century liberal arts curriculum from Junior Kindergarten through Grade 12. In partnering with parents, our approach to education is holistic, aspiring to graduate students who are spiritually, academically, emotionally, physically and socially mature.

At GCS, we do more than teach subjects to our students. We are developing high-capacity leaders, thinkers, and innovators for the future. Our learning environment is authentic and engaging, with a school culture that fosters mastery of learning, meaningful relationships, and global service.

One of the most common remarks heard from visitors that enter our building is that we have an undercurrent of peace at GCS. This peace is fast becoming a rare commodity in today's society and we thank God for his favour. One striking comment recently made by a parent was, "I am amazed at how the staff treat each other, how they love the students, and how there is peace in the hallways as the teachers do their job." For these things we give the credit to God; at the same time, we are reminded not to take this atmosphere for granted.

If you have any questions about any policy of the school as written in this handbook, please do not hesitate to contact us to clarify the question. By partnering together, we can help foster a healthy environment of growth.

- Mr. Jason Biech, M. Ed., Head of School

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of Grace Christian School is to offer a thorough Christian education, based on the inerrant and authoritative Word of God, with the ultimate goal of training each student to love the Lord with all his heart, soul, and mind.

The school provides a liberal arts curriculum, incorporating Christian standards of discipline and instruction with a continuous emphasis on Christian morals and ethics.

The school strives for excellence by teaching a curriculum based on a Christ-centred worldview, providing a qualified Christian faculty, and fostering obedience to God as the Sovereign Creator and Source of all truth and knowledge.

The school desires that students learn that Christianity is relevant to our culture and that each student has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ

1.2 Mission Statement

Grace Christian School is aspiring to graduate students who are spiritually, academically, emotionally, physically, and socially mature to the glory of God.

1.3 Vision Statement

Students will exemplify global citizenship in life-long learning, Christ-centred relationships, and service as they develop into the leaders, thinkers, and innovators of tomorrow.

1.4 Global Statement

The purpose of Grace Christian School is to educate students, while being taught from a Biblical worldview. Grace Christian School will create an environment where students are encouraged to work to the best of their potential to attain academic success, spiritual maturity, physical maturity, social maturity, and emotional maturity.

The achievement of these ends depends on the partnership of students, parents, church, and school staff, as well as the work of the Holy Spirit in each individual. Parents are ultimately responsible to God for the education of their child; therefore, a dedicated staff that loves God, loves people and serves others will support them in their endeavour to raise children with sound character.

1.5 Educational Objectives

Academic Maturity

Grace Christian School will create an environment where students have the opportunity to be intellectually-developed individuals, appropriate for their age and ability and who:

1. Meet the academic requirements of the GCS curriculum, accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).
2. Use critical thinking, creativity, logic, and common sense to effectively make decisions and solve problems, individually and as a group.
3. Communicate effectively in written and oral form.
4. Demonstrate understanding and competency in the use of current technology.

Spiritual Maturity

Grace Christian School will create an environment where students have the potential to be healthy Christian individuals, appropriate for their age and development, who:

1. Express their faith in and relationship with Jesus Christ and are able to articulate a defence for the Christian faith. *Galatians 2:20, I Peter 3:15,16*
2. Actively participate in a local church. *Hebrews 10:24- 25*
3. Are aware and support the work of missions. *Matthew 28:19-20*
4. Actively engage in community service activities. *Galatians 5:13-14*

Physical Maturity

Grace Christian School will create an environment where students have the potential to be physically fit individuals, appropriate for their age and ability, who:

1. Regard their bodies as God's temple and use them to glorify Him.
2. Maintain a healthy lifestyle.
3. Participate in a variety of sports and other physical activities.

Social Maturity

Grace Christian School will create an environment where students have the potential to be socially skilled individuals, appropriate for their age and ability, who:

1. Understand that all people are creations of God as Creator.
2. Demonstrate a loving attitude in social interactions.

3. Work effectively in teams.
4. Respect and honour fellow students, parents, teachers, and others.
5. Exhibit a work ethic that honours God.
6. Communicate effectively with others.

Emotional Maturity

GCS will endeavour to teach each student the kind of character and attitude that is necessary in becoming a productive, balanced, and successful adult.

1.6 Philosophy of Education

A Christian philosophy of education comprises a comprehensive worldview of God, of man, and of the universe. God, who is unchangeable, has revealed Himself in nature, in the person of Jesus, and in the Bible, which is authoritative in all matters of faith, truth, and practice. Jesus Christ alone provides that “unique point of reference” which gives to education an authoritative voice. (II Timothy 3:16-17)

Man is a special creation of God, made in God’s image, apart from any evolutionary process. Being made in God’s image, man has a sense of purpose, a sense of fulfilment, and a sense of destiny. Although he is a rational and moral being, capable of understanding and communicating ideas, man is separated from God due to inherent sin (Romans 3:23). However, he may be restored to full relationship with God through his acceptance of the redemptive work of Christ, applied by the Holy Spirit.

Kingdom education begins with knowing God through Jesus Christ “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3). No one is truly educated who does not know God. Man is dependent upon God for the ability to learn and apply truth. We believe that all truth is God’s truth. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Christian teachers must understand these basic principles of Kingdom education and be committed to them, demonstrating effectiveness in their ability to communicate them.

Kingdom education promotes a Biblical relationship within the family, the church, and the Christian school. According to the Scriptures, parents are responsible to God for the education of their children. The partnership of the home and the Christian school is needed to fulfill that responsibility. Knowledge of the Bible and of Jesus Christ, integrated with other subject matter, is essential to the development and growth of the child in matters physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual. Right behaviour is based on the proper concept of the origin and purpose of all things; namely, that whatever we do in word or deed should be done to the glory of God.

1.7 Statement of Faith

1. We believe in one God eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man (God-Man).
3. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, one with the Father and the Son, the indweller of every believer whereby each is sealed unto the day of redemption of the body.
4. We believe that God is the Creator and Sustainer of all things.
5. We believe that Scripture of the Old Testament and the New Testament is inspired of God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and conduct.
6. We believe in the existence and operating power of a real and personal being opposed to all righteousness and exalting himself against all that God is and has, the evil one called Satan, or the Devil.
7. We believe in a literal hell, the place of eternal punishment for the wicked dead.
8. We believe in a literal place called heaven where God's immediate presence is manifested, where the angels are, and where the redeemed shall ultimately be, from whence Christ descended and ascended again, where He makes intercession for the saints, and from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
9. We believe that God created man in His own image and in a state of innocence, but that through temptation man wilfully transgressed and became dead in trespasses and sins, whereby his posterity inherits a corrupt nature, being born in sin and under condemnation.
10. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice; that He arose from the dead in His glorified body, ascended into heaven, and as our great High Priest and advocate He ever lives to make intercession for us; that all who believe on His name are justified by the blood of Christ unto eternal life through the grace of God.
11. We believe that regeneration is a divine and instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit whereby God imparts life to one dead in trespasses and sin. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever.
12. We believe that sanctification is a divine and progressive work of the Holy Spirit whereby God, upon the ground of the finished work of Christ on the cross, His present intercessory ministry and His divine Word, sets the believer apart and works out, in, and through him by means of a submissive will that which is well-pleasing to Himself through Jesus Christ. This work culminates in the redemption of the body.
13. We believe in the one true church, the mystical Body and Bride of the Lord Jesus, composed of believers from Pentecost to the Rapture, into which believers are baptized by the Holy Spirit. We believe that the local church is an organization composed of professing believers instituted for the purpose of fellowship, worship, and service. In the matters of administration and policy, it is self-governing.
14. We believe that Christian baptism by immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the Bible mode of baptism and testifies of the believer's faith in, and identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour.

15. We believe that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance whereby believers show forth the Lord's death till He comes.
16. We believe in the glorious hope of the imminent, visible, and bodily return of Christ.

1.8 Core Values/Lifestyle Standard

All members of the board, administration, and staff of Grace Christian School believe the Bible is the written Word of God and without error in all its teachings (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Because of our understanding of the Old Testament and the New Testament, our school teaches these core family/lifestyle values:

1. It is unacceptable for Christians to teach hatred against any group or individual (Matthew 7:1, 12; Leviticus 19:18).
2. Human life begins at conception. An unborn child at any stage of development is a human being and should be treated as such (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 139:13-16).
3. Gender is biologically determined as male or female based on physical differences at birth or, when necessary, at the chromosomal level (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1-2).
4. Marriage is an exclusively heterosexual institution involving one man and one woman (Genesis 2:23-24; Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:26-27). Extramarital sexual intimacy, heterosexual or homosexual, is morally wrong. (1 Corinthians 6:18; Hebrews 13:4).

1.9 History

On August 11, 1977 Grace Baptist Church was incorporated; in the articles of incorporation was an allowance for both a kindergarten and Christian day school program. Grace Kindergarten began in the fall of 1978, and Grace Christian School began in September 1980 with thirty-two students from grades K-6.

The school has grown through diligent prayer, sacrifice, and the efforts of many dedicated people. GCS graduated its first high school class in 1987. In 1990, GCS became a member school of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

In 1992, seven new classrooms were added to the facility to accommodate the increasing enrollment and to provide better facilities. In 2002, an expansion added four classrooms, a library, and a science lab. In 2018, an large elementary wing added 8 classrooms, a new entryway/atrium, and a staff parking lot.

Since its founding, many children and their family members have been led to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through the school. Today our graduates attend various major universities worldwide and serve in many important roles of society.

1.10 Organization

Grace Christian School (GCS) is a certified private school under the Department of Education in the province of Prince Edward Island and is also certified by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). GCS is a division of Grace Baptist Church (GBC) and is operated under the church's elders; a School Committee elected annually by the church membership aids in the function of the school. The school principal/head of school is an ex-officio member of the GCS Committee and an elder of GBC.

The principal/head of school is responsible for the daily operation of the school.

2. General Information

2.1 Admission Requirements

Grace Christian School welcomes students and families from all backgrounds that meet the academic entrance requirements, have the potential to complete our standard and enhanced curriculum, wish to be engaged in a critical thinking educational platform taught in a manner consistent with a Biblical worldview, and agree to abide by the school policies (including the GCS handbook and the GCS Parent Commission).

Due to limited resources, students with special educational needs will be considered on an individual basis.

2.2 Acceptance

Acceptance is contingent upon the application, the results of an interview, and an examination of previous student records. Student(s) may be accepted at grade level, placed at a lower grade level, accepted on probation, or not accepted.

2.3 Age Requirements (Provincial School Act)

Kindergarten: Five years of age on or before December 31 of the current school year.

2.4 Withdrawal

Withdrawals must be made by the parent through the school office. Student records will not be released until all financial obligations are paid and all textbooks and materials have been returned. A family that withdraws their child after September 30th will be charged an additional two months' tuition payment.

After July 1, no portion of fees paid for the upcoming school year will be refunded in the event of an International/ESL student's absence, withdrawal, change in status, or dismissal from Grace Christian School.

2.5 Suspension or Expulsion

A student will be expelled from GCS when he is found to be out of harmony with the rules and policies of the school (not cooperating with the overall purpose and program of the school). Attitude or lack of effort may make it inadvisable for the student to remain or when a parent/guardian does not cooperate with school staff or administration. Additionally, when a

parent/guardian behaves in a manner that is a threat to the physical or emotional wellbeing of the staff or students, GCS reserves the right to restrict the parent/guardian from school property.

2.6 Reinstatement

Any student expelled from GCS will not be considered for re-enrollment for the current school year. Parents must meet with the principal before re-enrollment will be considered for the next school year.

2.7 School Hours

School hours are from 8:45am to 2:45pm for grades JK-6 and from 9:00am to 3:00pm for grades 7-12 each day. The school doors are opened at 8:35 am and are closed at 3:15pm. Students should arrive at school at least 5 minutes prior to their scheduled start time. Lunchtime is from 12:15pm to 12:55pm for grades 7-12 and 12:15pm to 12:55pm for grades JK-6 in each home room classroom. Parents are responsible for supervision after 3:15pm. If your son/daughter is on the school property for an unsupervised activity after 3:15pm, the school is released from any liability for injury or disability incurred.

Teachers have responsibilities during school hours. If you need to see the teacher, please make arrangements through the school office or email the teacher directly. School-related issues should be addressed by the parent to the teacher in person. Please do not contact teachers at home.

2.8 Calendar

The school calendar is available on the school website and includes the school program for the year.

2.9 Cancellation and Delays

The school will follow the PEI Public Schools Branch announcements for school cancellations due to weather or road conditions. It also follows the Colonel Gray and Charlottetown Rural families of schools for weather-related closures or delays. GCS families can opt-in to a text message option for school delays and closures upon request (details are sent to families near the beginning of the school year).

2.10 Teacher Standards and Qualifications

All of the teachers have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and dedicated to serving the Lord through the ministry of teaching. Teachers must meet the requirements of the Department of Education of P.E.I. Private School Act. In the case of Junior Kindergarten, an approved licence, as outlined in The Child Care Facilities Act, must be obtained.

2.11 Curriculum

Grace Christian School uses curriculum materials that agree with its philosophy of education. While GCS uses a variety of curriculum publishers and resources, it teaches all content from a Biblical worldview.

2.12 Conflict Resolution

Occasionally during the school year, misunderstandings or problems arise between people. This is often the result of poor communication between those involved.

GCS has adopted a policy to handle these situations. **Matthew 18:15-17** explains how people are to deal with one another when problems arise. All questions, problems, or concerns should be brought to the person(s) involved **first** before anyone else is involved. If the situation is not cleared up at this level through direct contact, the individual must meet with the principal and the teacher to discuss the situation.

Failing to follow this Biblical principle and discussing the situation with other parents generally results in misinformation and disharmony. When a parent/guardian behaves in a manner that is a threat to the physical or emotional wellbeing of the staff or students, GCS reserves the right to restrict the parent/guardian from school property.

2.13 Lunch

Students need to bring their own lunches to school. Lunch time will be supervised by a staff member. Depending on the availability of parent volunteers, a weekly lunch program may be offered. Additionally, milk may be purchased weekly for elementary students.

2.14 Library

The school library exists to provide an opportunity for the elementary students to read for recreation and information. Materials are divided into age-appropriate fiction sections and other categories such as biography, classics, or information.

2.15 School Parking

Extreme caution should be observed at all times while driving on campus. When picking up or dropping off students, please drive your car through the pick up/drop off lane in the main parking lot. Please follow the parking lot procedures and attendant to maintain student safety. Once your children are in the vehicle, proceed carefully out of the parking lot. This will ensure safety for the students who are exiting the school to the parking area and for those who walk home.

3. Home-School Relations

3.1 Parent/Teacher Conferences

Scripture supports the responsibility of parents in the education of their children; therefore, Grace Christian School acknowledges the importance of parents and school staff working together to maximize the academic and social growth of the child. In order to facilitate communication and foster this partnership, Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled three times per year, following the issuing of report cards at the end of the first, second, and third quarters. The staff of Grace Christian School strongly recommends that parents make time to attend at least one of these sessions each school year to stay connected with the school.

Conference scheduling will be conducted online approximately one week before the scheduled conferences (detailed instructions will be emailed to each parent). In order to provide as many parents as possible with the opportunity to see their child's teacher(s), appointments are scheduled in ten-minute intervals. In order to respect those individuals who have made appointments, conferences must be limited to the allotted time and unscheduled visits cannot be allowed since even a brief conversation will disrupt the anticipated order.

Scheduled Parent/Teacher Conferences are intended to be routine reviews of student performance in which the education partners discuss how they can work together to enhance academic success. If concerns or issues arise between these opportunities, the parent should immediately set up an appointment with the teacher to discuss them. This will prevent festering frustration and facilitate the timely resolution of a problem. In the rare event that the meeting of a teacher and parent does not resolve an issue, another appointment will be scheduled to include the principal.

As with any meeting of professionals, an attitude of respect will be maintained at all times. Aggressive behaviour, verbal assault, and/or harsh disparagement of anyone toward school staff will not be tolerated.

3.2 Parent Information Sessions

Information sessions are scheduled by the administration to share school vision, policies, and procedures with parents and to establish parent-school partnership.

In September, parents of new students are invited to meet with school staff in their classrooms to discuss their child's transition to the school and clarify any concerns they may have.

In the spring, the principal will send out information regarding the following school year. Topics discussed include school vision, tuition, financial support and fundraising, staffing, and curriculum.

3.3 Communication

GCS communicates with parents via the following means: email, school management software, and social media.

3.4 Special Programs and Assemblies

Occasionally, the availability of special speakers, films, or programs of significant spiritual, academic, or cultural value will be presented. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend these programs. Students are expected to attend the following special events, except for special exemption from school administration: Christmas Program (elementary students), Grade 12 Graduation (grade 12 students), School Closing (grades 1-11).

3.4 Caregiver Expectations

Parents/legal guardians have the primary responsibility for the care, well-being, education, discipline, and counselling of their children. It is with this in mind that GCS students are not permitted to attend GCS while living outside of their parents/legal guardian's home, whether as a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or international student, regardless of the student's age. Students may not live alone or without parental/legal guardian supervision for any length of time as a student of GCS.

All students, regardless of citizenship status, must live with their parent/legal guardian or an approved GCS homestay family. GCS chooses hosts who will provide the same Biblical values, caring environment, and personal attention they would ask a host family to provide for their own children: a comfortable, healthy, and supportive home that promotes cultural understanding and provides opportunities for learning, growth, and development.

Students, regardless of citizenship status, that are in need of a short-term (no more than 3 months) homestay must:

- Notify the school
- Stay with an approved GCS home stay
- Have a letter of permission from their parent/legal guardian
- Pay an additional GCS school fee of \$500 per month for added responsibility of the school and staff (in addition to the homestay fee).

4. Reporting

4.1 Student Records

The school maintains a permanent student record for all Grace Christian School students. Records of grades and standardized test scores make up most of the content in these files. Grace Christian School will release a copy of these files only at the request of the student's new school when moving to another school. Confidentiality of these files will be maintained. Records and/or transcripts will not be released when a student's tuition is not paid in full.

4.2 Report Cards and Grading

Report cards will be issued at the end of each grading period.

All entries made by the teacher on a student's report card are made after careful evaluation of classroom learning, attitudes, and effort. Please discuss each report with your child carefully. Grades should be guides in learning rather than goals for learning. Often, far too much emphasis is placed on grades. Grades are merely indicators of present achievement and not indicators of a student's ability to learn.

In addition to the standard grades, comments indicating effort and conduct will be given. Progress reports are sent home weekly for the primary grades; the high school students can review their grades through My School Management.

If, due to absences, a student has not completed or has missed assignments or evaluations by the end of the grading period, the student will receive an incomplete on the report card.

Grade Scale Table

Grades 1-3	Grade Scale	Grades 4-12	Grade Scale
97 - 100	A+	97 - 100	A+
94 - 96	A	94 - 96	A
90 - 93	A-	90 - 93	A-
87 - 89	B+	87 - 89	B+
84 - 86	B	84 - 86	B
80 - 83	B-	80 - 83	B-
77 - 79	C+	77 - 79	C+
74 - 76	C	74 - 76	C
70 - 73	C-	70 - 73	C-
60 - 69	D	67 - 69	D+
69 or less	Fail	64 - 66	D
		60 - 63	D-
		59 or less	Fail

4.3 Promotion and Retention

Students in grades 1-3 must earn a 70% average in a subject in order to receive a passing grade. Any student in these grades who do not meet the requirements in a core subject (reading, phonics, spelling, and math) may be retained.

Students in grades 4-12 must earn a 60% average in a subject in order to receive a passing grade. In grades 4-9, a student who fails three academic subjects will be retained in the same grade or will not receive an enrollment offer for the subsequent school year. Students must pass their Bible/Christian Ethics course. Students in grades 10-12 must earn 60% in a subject in order to receive a course credit.

Students who participate in the GCS English as a Second Language Program must meet the required outcomes and tests to move into the GCS mainstream academic program.

4.4 Senior High Graduation Requirements

In order for students to graduate from GCS, students must have a minimum of 20 credits. Five of the credits, one of which must be English, must be at the grade 12 level. The normal course load

for students at GCS in grades 10-12 is 8 credits per year. Therefore, GCS students typically graduate with 24 credits. Senior high minimum compulsory credits includes 3 language credits, 2 social studies credits, 2 mathematics credits, and 2 science credits, in addition to CEO401A, PED401A, and a designated “creative” course. GCS students must also earn all 3 Christian Ethics credits to graduate.

4.5 Tests and Exams

It is the responsibility of the student to make up all quizzes or tests missed. This will have to be completed as prearranged with the teacher. Students writing exams cannot be late or miss a midterm or final exam except in cases of severe, extenuating circumstances.

In an effort to allow students to concentrate on exam preparation, teachers in grades 7 -12 will not schedule tests in courses that have a midterm or final exam on the three calendar school days prior to the beginning of the applicable exam schedule. For instance, if exams begin on Monday the 15th, no tests will be scheduled on the previous Wednesday the 10th, Thursday the 11th, or Friday the 12th. This provision does not apply to quizzes or evaluation given as part of an exam. Students can expect to have course instruction and homework assignments as usual within this three day period.

4.6 Honour Roll

To qualify for the “A” honour roll, a student must have a 90% average or above for the entire year and no failure at the end of the year. To qualify for the “B” honour roll, a student must maintain an average of 80% or above and no failure at the end of the year.

4.7 Junior High Final Exam Exemptions

Exemptions are a privilege, not a right. Students in grades 7-9 may be exempt from writing the final exam in a subject if they meet the following minimum requirements:

- achieving at least 90% in that subject
- missing no more than 10 classes in that subject
- submitting all major assignments on time
- not being late to homeroom more than 8 times (affects all subjects)
- demonstrating a consistent conscientious effort in assignments, tests, and classroom work and showing a consistently positive attitude.

Personal trips count as absences and declared snow days are not counted as absences. Please note that students who have been placed on Step 2 of the discipline program are not eligible for exemptions.

Exemptions will be announced prior to final exams.

4.8. Senior High Final Exam Exemptions

This exam exemption policy is a strategy to reward diligence in the performance and completion of daily work, responsibility in meeting assignment criteria and deadlines, and consistency in attendance.

This policy applies to high school courses where final exams are used as a part of student assessment. It is understood that an exam exemption is a reward for students who have met the criteria set out in this policy.

To qualify for an exemption the student must meet each of the following criteria:

1. The student must demonstrate respect for and compliance with school policies and procedures. The principal has the right to veto an exemption if the behaviour of the student is not acceptable, specifically if the student has reached Step 2 of the discipline plan.
2. The student can have no more than eight (8) absences in a given course. An absence is defined as missing more than 50% of the scheduled class. Classes missed will be counted as absences unless:
 - (a) an extended absence due to sickness or hospitalization is verified by a doctor's note, or
 - (b) the absence is approved by the principal as a school event. e.g. track meet, science fair, etc.
3. The student can be tardy no more than four (4) times per school year to a given class and no more than six (6) times per school year to homeroom (missing homeroom and being present for first class results in a "tardy" in homeroom).
4. The student can miss no more than four (4) homework assignments per subject per school year.
5. The student must submit all major graded assignments, (term papers, book reports, projects, etc.) at the prescribed time on the due date. If the student is absent on the due date, the absence must be explained by a parental note and the assignment must be turned in to the subject teacher before 9am on the first day of the student's return to school.
6. The student must achieve an average of at least 80% (as calculated to the nearest tenth of a percent) in a given course.

Missing a major assignment deadline or more than four (4) homework assignments in a single subject or being late to homeroom more than six (6) times in the school year will result in the loss of the exemption privilege in all subjects.

Absences and grade average will be considered for exemption per subject.

4.9 Designated Assessment Completion Days

Assessments that are missed by students for any reason are to be made up at the earliest possible date. If students fail to complete missed assessments in a reasonable manner as deemed by the teacher, they will be responsible to complete these assessments on a Thursday afternoon (after school) as designated by the teacher. Teachers will send a notice to the parent and student no less than two days in advance; this date will be mandatory and student attendance is required.

4.10 Awards and Scholarships

The Ambassador Award is the highest honour given by Grace Christian School and goes to the student considered the best example of overall spiritual, academic, and/or athletic qualities. The Governor General's Award goes to the graduating senior with the highest combined academic average for grades 11 and 12. The Jason Biech Legacy Award goes to the student who embraces the culture and vision of GCS through a lasting legacy of leadership. The Laura Mattson Sports Award goes to the top male and female athletes in junior and senior high school. The Dave Wessel Science Award is presented to the Junior and Senior High students who excelled in Science. The Neil Thompson Social Studies Award is presented to the student who shows keen interest in the social sciences. The Anne Laird Award is presented to the student who best exemplifies school spirit. The Dr. Susanne Huizing Scholarship for English Language Learners goes to the student who overcomes a language barrier to impact the school community. The Pamela Thompson Mathematics Award is presented to the junior and senior high students who demonstrate keen interest and ability in the field of mathematics. The Landmark Valuation Award is presented to the student who articulates an academic defence of the Biblical worldview of creation versus evolution. The Myrna O'Connor, Heart of Service, and Faithful Steward Scholarships are awarded to graduates. Students can also qualify for external bursaries and scholarships.

4.11 Supplementary Exams

High school students (grades 10-12) who have failed to meet the requirements to receive their credit may, at the discretion of the teacher in consultation with the principal, be granted the privilege to write a supplementary exam. To qualify for the supplementary exam, the student must have attained a minimum mark of 50% on the final exam and shown consistent diligence in class and the completion of assignments. Students who are successful in the supplementary exam will receive a maximum mark of 60%, the required mark required to obtain a credit in a course at Grace Christian School.

4.12 Standardized Testing

All students from grades K-12 will be given tests every other year that compare their academic achievement with those from across the nation. These tests will be administered periodically at the discretion of the principal. All students are expected to participate.

5. Student Expectations

5.1 Philosophy and Objectives

At Grace Christian School, we show respect, take care of our school, are polite and helpful, are prepared, and respond when directed.

During school hours and at after-school activities, students are expected to respond to faculty and supervisory staff members with obedience in action and respect in attitude. Any failure to maintain a Biblical attitude of respect and obedience toward school authority which manifests itself in improper behaviour will result in disciplinary action.

Each student is expected to avoid practices that would cause the loss of his testimony, bring disharmony to the school community, or bring reproach to the Lord Jesus Christ, his parents, or this school.

At GCS, we expect students to show respect for God, country, family, faculty, fellow students, guests, and all other stakeholders. Therefore, lying, cheating, stealing, profanity, disrespect, disharmonious behaviour, immorality, or illegal activities will not be tolerated. Plagiarism (the act of taking another's work and claiming it as one's own) shows disrespect for another's own thoughts and ideas and as such will be dealt with under the GCS Ethical Writing Standards. Attendance at GCS is a privilege and not a right. Constructive suggestions are always welcome but griping will not be tolerated. Students who are not interested in a Christian education and who have no intention of being submissive to God's will or the authority of the school will be dealt with directly.

5.2 Dress Code

The GCS dress code is modest, clean, neat, and appropriate. The general guideline for elementary school is **CASUAL DRESS** and for high school is **BUSINESS CASUAL DRESS**.

To promote school spirit, students are encouraged to purchase and wear our GCS-branded apparel. These t-shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts, and hoodies may be worn on any school day, with the possible exception of certain special events. Because of the casual nature of these items, they may be worn with jeans if desired by both elementary and high school students, providing the jeans meet the overall dress code requirements of “modest, clean, neat, and appropriate” (i.e. no rips/tears). In grades 7-12, sweatpants/gym pants, outerwear (jackets), and hats may not be worn in class.

All clothes are to fit properly and are not to be worn when they are either too tight or too loose. No one should ever see a student's underwear at school.

Outerwear and snow boots are not to be worn in class. In times of cold weather, students should wear a sweater if they are not dressed warmly enough already.

All clothing is to be free of any rips, tears, or holes.

If a student is in doubt about an individual article of clothing, we recommend that he/she bring it into the school and ask for permission to wear it first, before wearing it.

5.3 Elementary School Dress Code (Grades 1-6)

Elementary clothes are to be **modest, clean, neat, and appropriate**. All messages on clothing must be positive and subtle in nature. Shorts and skirts must not be shorter than 3 inches above the knee or longer. Sleeveless shirts and dresses are permitted.

5.4 High School Boys Dress Code (grades 7-12)

- In keeping with business casual attire, boys are to wear structured pants or shorts.
- Boys are to wear collared or buttoned shirts or sweaters.
- A student who is wearing GCS branded clothing has the privilege of wearing jeans to school.
- All messages on clothing must be positive and subtle in nature.
- Hats are permitted outdoors only.

5.5 High School Girls Dress Code

- In keeping with business casual attire, girls are to wear dresses, skirts, pants, or shorts. Skirts/dresses and shorts are to be 3 inches above the knee or longer.
- Shirts or tops with modest necklines are to be worn. All tops are to continually cover the midriff. Sleeveless shirts and dresses are permitted.
- A student who is wearing GCS branded clothing has the privilege of wearing jeans to school.
- All messages on clothing must be positive and subtle in nature.

5.6 Special Occasion Dress

On announced special occasions, students will be given specific directions as to what to wear.

5.7 Phys. Ed. Dress

Physical education clothing for all grades is sweatpants or athletic shorts, sweatshirts or T-shirts, sport socks, and sneakers. Shorts are to be 3 inches above the knee or longer. Sneakers worn for gym should not be worn outside. Clothes with positive or neutral messages are permitted for gym, but no message written across the seat of the pants or otherwise designed to draw attention to specific body parts are to be worn. Students must change back into regular school dress unless gym class is the last class of the day. Please label clothing. The physical education teachers will clarify appropriate clothing at the beginning of each school year.

5.8 Footwear

- Shoes are to be worn at all times.
- Athletic sandals without socks and flip-flops are not permitted due to hygienic reasons.
- Kindergarten and elementary students must have a second pair of shoes to be worn inside.
- According to provincial regulations, kindergarten and elementary students are required to wear socks at all times while at school.

5.9 Hair

Any hairstyle designed to attract attention is unacceptable and must be changed before the student can return to school. Students are to have well-kept hair. Students are to keep their hair a natural colour, preferably their own natural colour.

5.10 Earrings and Piercing

No facial piercings are to be worn to school except for in the ear. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.

5.11 Repercussions

Minor dress code violations will be dealt with by the staff member in charge of dress. The student will be talked to privately and asked to not wear that article of clothing again. In the case of a major dress code violation, parents will be contacted to arrange for their child to get a change of clothes. Repeat dress code offenders will be handled through the discipline process.

5.12 Prohibited Articles

The following items are prohibited: illegal substances (including tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, narcotics etc.) and weapons (including knives, guns, etc.)

Any other materials or media deemed inappropriate due to content (eg. books, magazines, etc) will be confiscated. Inappropriate digital media (ie. on computers, tablets, phones, etc) is prohibited.

Electronic gaming devices should not be brought to school and are not permitted at school functions.

5.13 Social Responsibility

It is the goal of GCS that students focus on building healthy, meaningful relationships with their peers during school and school events; therefore, students are to refrain from isolating themselves from their peers or other responsibilities via electronic gaming devices, cell phones, tablets, and listening to music.

Due to privacy concerns, photography may be conducted only with permission from a teacher.

5.14 Disciplinary Action

Normal day-to-day misdemeanours by students will be handled within the classroom context. Under all circumstances it is expected that students will make an effort to follow the general classroom expectations (as outlined in section 5.2) and the specific classroom expectations set forth at the beginning of the school year by each teacher. If a teacher sees a pattern of inappropriate behaviour or senses a rebellious attitude, the student will meet with the principal and will be placed on the discipline plan.

It is important that parents understand that every step of this process is designed to bring about correction, not punishment. By partnering with parents, we want to see students deal with the real issues in their heart and to see a heart/attitude change in all circumstances.

Teachers may choose to take away privileges from a student for minor infractions (especially unfinished assignments) or for actions that took place in class. In such cases, the teacher will be responsible for reporting such action to the principal.

When a student is referred to school leadership, the four-step discipline plan (based on the Matthew 18 principle of conflict resolution) will be followed. Each step will be documented to avoid errors or inconsistencies.

5.15 The Four-Step Discipline Plan

The first step, upon visiting the school leadership the first time, is purposely not made into a big ordeal. The teacher reports to the leadership why the student was brought to them; the student and the leadership then discuss the matter. The student is shown where the problem lies, what needs to be done to correct the problem, and then is encouraged to correct the problem on his own. In all cases, leadership will expect forgiveness and restitution to be offered to the offended individual(s). This will be considered a major part of the first step. An unwillingness to seek forgiveness and restitution will quickly bring the student to the second stage of discipline.

If progress is made and correction takes place, no further action needs to be taken. If the problem persists and correction is not being made by the student, the teacher will eventually return the student to the leadership and step two will be carried out.

Step two involves the parents as well as the student. When the same student is brought to leadership again for the same general reason, an explanation of what has taken place to this point is given to the parent, and the parent is asked to help bring about the correction explained in step one by working with the child at home. This partnering approach should be enough to keep the student accountable for his actions. Sometimes, parents are able to give the school advice on how to handle the student at this step. Any constructive parental input at this point is encouraged.

If progress is made and the correction takes place at this point, no further action needs to be taken. If a student seems to be making progress but has a relapse or an isolated incident, the second step may be repeated without moving on to step three; however, if progress is still not seen and correction is not made, we move to step three.

The third step represents a significant change to the level of seriousness in the discipline process. At the third step, parents, the principal, the student, and another school representative are brought together for a meeting. At this “intervention”, a probation period is agreed upon which includes a definite time frame and specific actions which must be taken by the student in order to see the problem corrected. When the probationary plan is complete and all are in agreement, step

three is then followed through. The objective in step three is to identify whether the student is unwilling or simply unable to control him/herself at this time.

If, after this third step, correction still has not been made, the student will be considered at step four. Step four is a recommendation for dismissal by the principal. In cases where the student has made it clear that they are unwilling to change, the student will be dismissed. If it is determined that the student is unable to correct himself, despite the help from parents and the school, special consideration will be given to see that the student gets the help he needs, but the student will likely be dismissed.

It is important to stress that from the second step and beyond that partnership and cooperation from parents is essential. If parents do not work alongside the school, but are adversarial or defensive of the student, it is unlikely that correction will be brought about. Students of parents who show an unwillingness to cooperate in the discipline of their children will need to be dismissed.

6. Students

6.1 Chapel

At the heart of Kingdom education is the concern for the spiritual growth and vitality of the student body. As a part of this concern, chapel programs will be planned to challenge students to know who God is and to grow in their relationship with Christ. Chapel is compulsory for all students.

6.2 Bible/Christian Ethics Class

All students are required to take Bible/Christian Ethics classes, understanding that the principles that are taught will follow the school's statement of faith.

There is a community service component to the Christian Ethics program in grades 7-12 so that the students can put their faith into action. Students involved in the Duke of Edinburgh program are exempt from this service because there is a service requirement included in it. Across grade 7-12, a student will complete on average 200 hours of community service.

Passing Bible/Christian Ethics is mandatory at all grade levels.

6.3 Off Campus Courses

GCS students will be ineligible to take courses at other schools during the regular school hours.

6.4 Attendance

Students are urged not to take time from school unless it is absolutely necessary. There is no substitute for good attendance. Missing school regularly can negatively impact a student's academic, social, and emotional outcomes.

If your child is to be absent for the entire day or part of a day, a parent must contact the office or homeroom teacher via phone or email.

6.5 Homework

The purpose of homework is to develop study habits, to give opportunity for enrichment, and to complete unfinished class work. Time needed to complete homework will vary if the student does not make efficient use of class time or as the curriculum necessitates.

A teacher will expect each student to turn in assignments completed and on time. Chronic failure to complete homework will be brought to the attention of the parents and the principal.

6.6 Make-up Work

Students who are absent from school because of sickness or other reasons must check with their teachers immediately upon returning to school in order to receive the assignments missed. It is not the responsibility of the teacher to contact the student. Students will be required to complete their work in a timely manner. Work not completed within that length of time will be given a zero unless there are extenuating circumstances.

6.7 Student Expectations for Extracurricular Involvement

Students are encouraged to participate in GCS extracurricular activities; however, this involvement is dependent on the demonstration of proper study habits, academic achievement, and character.

- **Study Habits:** students are expected to miss no more than 3 homework assignments in a given course per quarter. If more than 3 are missed, students and parents will be notified that the student is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities until a consistent improvement in work habits is evidenced.
- **Academic Achievement:** students are expected to maintain a passing grade in each course. If a student is failing a course, students and parents will be notified that the student is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities until the student's grade returns to a

passing level or with a structured plan for improvement is agreed upon by parents, teachers, and administration.

- **Character:** students are expected to demonstrate respect, integrity, and community to all members of GCS. If a student fails to habitually demonstrate this character, students and parents will be notified that the student is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities until a consistent improvement in character is evidenced.

6.8 Closed Campus Policy

With two exceptions, students are not permitted to leave school property during the school day unless they are being escorted by a teacher or parent.

The first exception is for high school students who wish to leave at lunch time or during “free” periods. Senior high school students (grade 10-12) may leave school property at lunch time or “free periods” if they have written/digital permission from their parents at the beginning of the school. Since this is such a privilege, it will be understood that failure to return to school on time even once may result in the loss of this privilege and/or other repercussions.

The second exception is for students who live close enough to walk home for lunch. Students who walk home for lunch must provide written/digital permission to do so at the beginning of the year.

6.9 Cars

It is the parents’ responsibility to monitor their children’s passengers and that their children are adhering to the provincial graduated licensing legislation.

Upon arriving at school, students are to park their car in the designated student parking area and enter the school.

6.10 Traffic Patterns in the Building

Certain areas of the building are out of bounds for school children at all times except when given permission by the teacher. Grade 7-12 students are not to enter the church/child care centre area (except when classes are scheduled in that area); parents are only to enter and exit the building via the main school entrance.

6.11 Personal Property

Personal property is expected to be stored properly in appropriate storage units (i.e. lockers, cubbies, desks). Grade 7-12 students are encouraged to lock their lockers.

6.12 Textbooks

Students are expected to take care of textbooks and return them in acceptable condition. Parents will be charged for lost or damaged textbooks.

6.13 Visitors and Parents

For safety reasons, all parents and visitors must report to the office and sign in during the school day.

6.14 Technological Devices/Tools

Each elementary student is provided a digital device to be used in their classroom at the discretion of their classroom teacher.

Students in grade 7-12 are required to have their own digital device. While a laptop or chromebook is preferred, a student may use an iPad or other tablet in most situations. Should a student require a device, chromebooks may be rented from the school office for a daily fee. Devices are to be used only at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Printing fee is \$0.10/page.

6.15 Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones are not to be used in the hallways, washrooms, or classrooms during the school day without permission from a teacher. Students are encouraged to keep their device in their locker (with the ringer/sounds turned off). When permission is given for use, students are to use their phones/devices only as directed, after which the phone is put away. Failure to comply with these measures will result in the confiscation of the cell phone by the staff member. It will then be turned over to the principal. Repeat offenders will lose the privilege of having a cell phone at school.

7. Financial Information

7.1 Payment

Payment for all expenses incurred at Grace Christian School will be met through three sources: 1) payment of tuition and fees, 2) gifts and donations, and 3) approved fundraising efforts. Tuition and fee structures for Grace Christian School are reviewed annually and are therefore subject to change. A current school bill structure can be obtained from the school office or online via MySchool Management. Tuition can be paid via post-dated cheques, cash, debit/credit, or

etransfer/wire payment. Monthly payments for the school bill are accepted as a convenience to school families. Grace Christian School is a non-profit division of Grace Baptist Church and it does not solicit nor accept direct government funding.

7.2 Fee Structure

The tuition fees for Grace Christian School for the school year **2022-2023** are:

Junior Kindergarten -	\$5000 (half-day)
	\$6500 (full day)
Kindergarten – Grade 12	\$6500
International/ELL -	\$15500

Tuition fee includes curriculum resources; it does not include items such as field trips, lunch, graduation fee (grade 12), athletics, or other extra-curricular activities.

7.3 Legacy Fund

Gifts to the Legacy Fund serve to enhance the programs of GCS. While tuition covers most of the annual expenses such as teacher salaries and benefits, maintenance and utilities, textbooks, and school supplies, contributions to the Annual Fund enable Grace Christian School **to increase the level of excellence in all aspects of our educational programs, including infrastructure needs**. This excellence means that teachers and students have the finest tools available for learning; technology is current; facilities are state-of-the-art; financial aid is available to families in need; opportunities for faculty to grow professionally are ample; additional instructional space is provided; and most importantly, the spiritual vitality of the entire student body is thriving. Grace Christian School’s commitment to students and parents is to provide an outstanding academic experience and to point children toward Jesus Christ in every aspect of their educational training. This is what the Plant-a-Seed Fund makes possible. **All families are encouraged to give to this fund annually.**

7.4 Re-enrollment

Re-enrollment fee is non-refundable. Failure to re-enroll by the annual deadline will result in your child’s place being made available to another student.

Re-enrollment rate:

Before **Annual Deadline** - **\$200** per family

Before **June 30** - **\$250** per family

After **June 30** - **\$300** per family

International student re-enrollment is due by April 30.

Any student whose account is not paid in full by the end of the school year will not be allowed to re-enroll at GCS for the next school year, except in extenuating circumstances. Any account not current by March Break will not be eligible for re-enrollment.

7.5 Registration Fee For New Families

The registration fee for new families is **\$250** non-refundable and payable upon registration.

7.6 Late Payments

School payments are due on the fifth day of each month from September to June.

Unless arrangements have been made which are acceptable to school leadership, any family with an outstanding school bill after thirty (30) days will be contacted to inform them that their children are no longer eligible to attend the school.

7.7 Returned Cheques

A penalty of **\$50.00** will be charged in addition to the next school payment for any NSF cheque given to Grace Christian School.

7.8 Report Cards/Graduation Diplomas

Report cards and graduation diplomas will be withheld until all accounts are current.

7.9 Waiting List

Registration payments made for students who are placed on a waiting list and who do not get a placement in the school will have their money refunded at the end of the first full week of school.

7.10 Books

Students are expected to take care of textbooks and return them in acceptable condition. Parents will be charged for lost or damaged textbooks.

7.11 Late Fees

A late fee of **\$35** will be charged to your school account after the fifth of each month.

7.12 Tax Receipts

End of the year receipts will be issued for all grades for the eligible religious portion of tuition paid as per CRA for income tax purposes. These receipts will be issued by **February 28** of each year.

8 Parental Expectation

8.1 Parent Commission

The leadership, faculty, and staff of Grace Christian School seek to assist parents in training their children by operating the school in accordance with its Statement of Faith, mission, core values, philosophy of education, and stated policies. In return, in keeping with the biblical principle that parents are primarily responsible for the education of their children and recognizing that the school and parents must partner together in agreement in order for success to be the result (Amos 3:3), the school's leadership and administration asks parents and/or guardians of Grace Christian School students to make the following acknowledgments and agreements concerning their children:

- We understand and acknowledge our commitment to the stated biblical Christian world view mission, Statement of Faith, Core Values, and philosophy of education at Grace Christian School. (GCS Handbook Section 1)
- We understand and agree to abide by, and reinforce to our children, the policies (e.g. academic and moral standards) and procedures of Grace Christian School (e.g. dress code, arrival and departure times, traffic patterns, attendance, etc.) as they are communicated in appropriate school literature. We acknowledge that, as parents, we are ultimately accountable for both the external actions and internal attitudes of our children and accept our God-given responsibility to disciple them.
- We will keep apprised of our children's academic progress and behavior by appropriately communicating on a frequent and consistent basis with their teachers.
- If we profess Christ as our Saviour, we will undertake to regularly pray for the school leadership, faculty, staff, and students of Grace Christian School.
- We agree to support the academic standards of Grace Christian School by providing our children with an adequate and regular time and place to study and by supervising the completion of regular homework and special assignments.
- We resolve to handle disputes appropriately by dealing directly with the person or persons involved without criticizing them or the school. We will maintain confidentiality of matters between teachers and administration, not sharing these with our children or any other individual not a part of the problem or solution. Our attitude should be one of edification and redemption.

- We will take an active interest in all aspects of Grace Christian School, including, but not limited to, student performances, athletics, outreach activities, and fundraising opportunities, and, as God leads us and opportunities arise, assume volunteer duties and responsibilities.
- We agree to pay all financial obligations to the school promptly. If unable to do so because of unforeseen circumstances, we will notify the school immediately.
- We agree to the GCS Technology Acceptable Use Policy and consent to our child having a Google GSuite for Education account (grades 5-12).
- We will prioritize the school calendar, planning ahead so conflicts can be avoided and staying apprised of school information by visiting the school website and monitoring notices sent from the school via our children, email, and social media.
- We agree to allow the school to use our child(ren)'s picture and school work for promotional purposes (ie website, social media, brochures, etc).

8.2 Statement of Cooperation

It is necessary that the student (grades 5-12) read this handbook carefully. The Statement of Cooperation is to be signed the first day of school (form will be provided by homeroom teacher).

8.3 Additional

The administrators of Grace Christian School and its representatives have the right to:

- Change handbook policies without prior notice as required.
- Change tuition fees.
- Suspend or expel any student according to written policy.
- Search student bags, desks, or lockers for illegal or dangerous items without prior notice.
- Restrict any parent or student from GCS property due to threat of physical or emotional harm to GCS staff or students.

